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The Way of Youth

A Chapter from an Autobiography

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JANUARY first, 1881, and a cold, frosty morning. The men from the farm were going down to the marsh to bring out some of the salt hay, so my trunk and I rode with them on the heavy horse-drawn sled, down to the little red-painted Hampton Falls "depot" of the Eastern Railroad. Seventeen years of one period of life came to a definite end and a new one began, leading to – what?

Seventeen is an age that can ill choose for itself except on rare occasions where genius is involved, and in this particular case that was not a controlling factor. The wisdom of a father possessed of much of that strong character and philosophical insight that marked so many of that generation of Unitarian ministers, made good the lack, and architecture was chosen as the destined career of a son too careless of habit and diffuse of mind to choose for himself.

In due course the accommodation train came to its goal in the smoke and the frozen steam of the Eastern Depot, one of the four railway stations that then lined up disreputably along Causeway Street in the Mecca of Boston, and thereafter a hack worked its way to Dwight Street, at that time a sort of debatable land between the eminent respectability of Union Park and the not at all debatable purlieus of Dover Street and Shawmut Avenue. Dwight Street was then, in a way, the Pinckney Street of a later day, and there were gathered together music students and other searchers for fame, and, particularly, that phenomenon of the period, the girl students of elocution. The house especially connected with these recollections of "the passionate eighties" was held by a fine old gentleman with white moustache and goatee and the courtly manners of a passing age, and his wife, whose memories of earlier opulence cast a certain radiance over the manifestly decayed gentility of the domicile. It was a very domestic household, with its students of music, elocution, and architecture as "guests" – the dignified Corporation Counsel of the city added for good measure; quite a providential environment for a green and fuzzy youth fresh from the sheltered precincts of a Unitarian parsonage in a little New Hampshire town.

While my father held his pastorate in Westford, Massachusetts, I had made my first and lasting friend, a boy called "Guy" Prescott. We were then thirteen years old, and enthusiastically we shared our nascent hopes and fears, our slow-growing knowledge of the ways of life. We studied the same books, experimented with the same music, fell in love with the same girls. The year after I came to Dwight Street, he came, also, and for fifteen years we lived together, proceeding from Dwight Street to Union Park, and so to

Beacon Hill, finding ourselves at last in Pinckney Street, that "Rive Gauche" of student life in Boston where all must, happily, sojourn for a time. He enters here because of the much I owe him, both through personal contact and from the fact that he, more than any other, opened up for me the world of music.

The curious relationship between architecture and music has often been noted, but no one has ever explained satisfactorily what this is. The ancient and facile dictum that "architecture is frozen music" seems to me singularly unconvincing and, in point of validity, to take its place with Swinburne's

The lilies and languors of virtue,
The roses and raptures of vice . . .

which Chesterton, with commendable reticence and notable accuracy, calls the worst couplet in the English language. That there is some mystical kinship (not mathematical as some would assert today, I am persuaded) is certainly a fact, and so I am glad that for a space of five or six years my own personal associations were almost wholly with music students.

Little by little, other personal influences came in; architects, painters, sculptors, poets, and literary venturers of all sorts, and life began to widen out and take on a certain consistency and unity through multiplicity. The temper and tempo of the time were different indeed to what they had become a generation later. There was something in the air that continued for twenty years and has not been experienced since. There was a spirit of high adventure energized by a buoyant optimism; a sufficient self-consciousness which, for one, I look back on now with a certain nostalgia that is something more than the wistful recollection of youth on the part of old age. Has youth today that crescent hope and courage and bright vision of good things to come? I doubt it, and I am not surprised. It is true, however, that the world needs these things now even more than then, and for my own part, I think there are signs that soon they may return. Ours was perhaps a false dawn, then in those years between 1885 and 1900, but, astronomically (if not cosmically) speaking, this is only the herald of a new day.

To us it was a golden age, with the promise of high fulfillment. Everything seemed to open out around us like the bursting of enormous fireworks. We thought we were chosen people in a chosen time. Nor was this altogether surprising, though it proved in the testing quite illusory. We felt that we were surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, and so we were. If you catalogue the great personalities of the time, this seems in itself almost unique in history, barring perhaps Periclean Athens and the crest of the Renaissance.

There was the fresh and stimulating memory of Blake, Turner, Ruskin, and Emerson, but the living great were a more potent influence and their name was legion. Here in America we had Charles Eliot Norton, George Santayana, Walt Whitman, and, for civic inspiration, Grover Cleveland. England furnished the greatest galaxy with Cardinal Newman, Matthew Arnold, Browning, Swinburne, du Maurier, Walter Pater, Stevenson, Kipling, William Morris, all the Pre-Raphaelites, especially Rossetti and Burne-

Jones. France gave us Daudet, Flaubert, de Maupassant, Huysmans, Anatole France, Pierre Loti, Verlaine. In music we had Wagner and Brahms and the Gilbert and Sullivan operas; in the theatre Bernhardt, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Modjeska, Ada Rehan, Salvini, Booth, Jefferson, and a score more of minor but potent personalities. Especially for us architects there were Richardson and McKim, and in England Bodley and Sedding. Looming over all, in a sense, was the ivory image of Pope Leo XIII.

This then was the spiritual environment in which we fellows found ourselves when personal consciousness seemed to become operative about the year 1885. So far as I myself was concerned it began earlier by a year or two and the motive causes were especially three: the Wagner operas when Theodore Thomas first brought them to, of all inappropriate places, Mechanics Hall; the first Pre-Raphaelite watercolours and photographs shown at the old Art Museum in Copley Square; and, curiously enough, the first performance of *Patience* at the Boston Museum with George Wilson as Bunthorne and Sadie Martineau as Lady Angela. It really is not too much to say that with the "Ring" operas, heaven opened for me. Then and there I became a besotted Wagnerite and have remained so to this day, holding stubbornly to my idol when later my musical companions rejected him in their superiority, and witnessing, after many years, his reinstatement in much of his old glory. A little later it was the Boston Theatre that became the musical Mecca, and there are few pleasanter memories than that of waiting in the queue for the gallery doors to be opened and rushing dizzily up the circular stairs to the dollar seats in the "nigger heaven" where much could be heard but little seen except in a bird's-eye-view sort of way.

I suppose that to everyone there comes a moment when a certain definite thing, not necessarily in itself of major importance or even appositeness, acts as the precipitant on a fluid and amorphous personality, bringing some sort of order out of the chaos and dark night of immaturity, and in a way lifting self-consciousness out of the unconscious. With me, I know, it was music, particularly that of Richard Wagner; though all operas, and the Symphony Concerts in the old Music Hall in Hamilton Place, and the piano-playing of my first human associates in Boston, were fish to my net, even though I could never learn to read music or play any musical instrument. Just why Wagner, and especially his Ring cycle, should have made – and still make – a more personal and poignant appeal than even Bach or Brahms or Beethoven, I do not know, unless it is because, from the time of Louis le Débonnaire to that of Henry VIII my forebears in direct line were Teutonic "Freiherren" in the Grand Duchy of Brunswick, and some inherited racial inclination persisted in my subconscious personality. In any case, the impulse and the call were there, and the first time I went to Europe in the year 1886 was primarily for the purpose of attending the Wagner Festival in Bayreuth. Here three performances of *Parsifal* and three of *Tristan* in the space of two weeks, with Richter conducting and Materna, Winckleman, and Scaria singing, together with others personally trained by Wagner himself, was enough to make or mar any youth of twenty-three who had just begun to open his eyes on a world of wonder and enchantment.

Almost simultaneously came the Pre-Raphaelite revelation through the small showing at the old Art Museum, and the appearance of the Rossetti poems, and these three things, music, painting, and poetry, will always remain associated in my mind as a dynamic unit of inspiration. The ground had already been measurably prepared for the pictorial seed, for by that time I had read everything that Ruskin had written; my father's small library contained all his books as well as Emerson, Matthew Arnold, and Carlyle, admirably – and providentially – balancing the scientific side consisting of a full assortment of the works of Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Tyndal, Huxley, and the other evolutionists of all sorts. Most of this I had devoured by the time of the Wagner-Rossetti revelation (with Walter Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Dumas, and the Arabian Nights for added literary and emotional stimulus) and so the balance between speculative and philosophical science on the one hand, and aesthetics of every sort on the other, was definitely inclined in the latter direction.

Indeed these same Pre-Raphaelite pictures were responsible for my first literary effort that won me away from architecture for a few years and gave me that newspaper experience that I would not have missed for anything. This is not quite true; the very first appearance I ever made in print was a passionate appeal to the people of Boston to preserve Trinity Church (then the object of contemporary architectural idolatry) from a peril that had suddenly revealed itself. Some real-estate operator or other had acquired title to the little triangle of land in front of the church (the façade of which was still unfinished) and announced his intention of building thereon a four-story triangular apartment house. I saw red and in a fury of indignation wrote a passionate appeal (of course to the *Transcript*) for all good citizens to rise in their might and avert this shocking act of vandalism. I remember that E. H. Clement, who was then Editor, printed my effusion with the caption "Have We a Ruskin Among Us?" Whether this, my first advent into public affairs, had anything to do with the issue I know not, but in any case the result was that "Trinity Triangle" was taken over by the City and the peril passed.

As soon as one begins writing letters to the Editor – whether in the London *Times* or the Boston *Transcript* – the die is cast and so one continues to the end. "Cacoethes scribendi" has seized upon its victim and nevermore may he escape its subtle and persistent virus. The Pre-Raphaelite pictures gave the next incentive, and with much purple phraseology I begged leave again to appeal to the citizens of Boston to recognize the Apocalyptic glory of this work and its revelation of new worlds opening in a new radiance. I have never dared to turn back into the files of the *Transcript*, searching out the issues for, I think, the years 1885 and 1886. I fear the worst; and yet, whatever they were, they must have struck some chord in the heart of E. H. Clement for he incontinently sent for me to call on him and forthwith offered me the position of art critic.

At the age of twenty-two this had the aspect of a dazzling opportunity, but it presented the question:

should it be architecture as a career with five years as student and draughtsman for foundation; or literature through the open doors of journalism? Already, through a fly-by-night architectural competition (I shall return to this episode later), I had won a monetary prize that, in my innocence, I estimated as large enough to accomplish a brief European visit. I made the venture with a high heart, sending back many most highly coloured special articles to the hospitable *Transcript*, and doing the best I could to give cause for an affirmative answer to Mr. Clement's query as to a possible Ruskinian reincarnation. The favour accorded these contributions (it was an age when purple passages in any sort of literature were avidly received) turned the scale, and I forsook the architecture my father had chosen for me and launched out into the doubtful seas of journalism.

The venture was neither long nor wholly auspicious, for the pecuniary returns were measurably less than I had calculated by multiplying the number of columns I could, with industry, produce in a week by the standard price per column, while in the end I developed a certain repugnance to commenting *in extenso* on exhibits of pictures I considered bad, even when the proprietors of the galleries implicated were generous advertisers; an inhibition which was not sympathetically accepted by the business management. The result was a severance of relations, and all was to be begun again.

Nevertheless the venture was providentially contrived, for I found myself, for a time, out of the rather narrow environment (as it was then) of an architectural office and in touch with older men of broad minds and constructive energy, while the friends I made were no longer music students and architectural draughtsmen but artists of all sorts and ambitious youths who, like myself, had literary aspirations. This should have meant, and I hope did mean, a certain broadening out of intellectual as well as artistic interests that was of some benefit in the actual practice of architecture later to be resumed.

At that time Henry Clapp was the brilliant dramatic critic of the *Post*, then the most distinguished of the Boston morning papers, while William Apthorp was musical critic of the *Transcript*. Clarence Barron was the *Transcript's* financial editor and Robert Lincoln O'Brien the Washington correspondent. These were all men whose influence was both stimulating and, in most instances, curbing as well of callow impetuosity, hence of inestimable value.

It is this youth movement of the eighties that I want to remember here; the varied personalities, their visions and ambitions, the tentative motions made toward creative action and the workings of that spiritual influence that seemed to be implicit in the air we breathed. The inner circle, those who forgathered most constantly and intimately and who were responsible for the organization of the "Pewter Mugs", the "Visionists", and the "Procrastinatorium" as well as for the publication of *The Knight Errant* and *The Mahogany Tree*, was not large, but it was very active. Many of the names have gone into oblivion, sometimes through the frustration of early death or that consequent on too deep an imbibing of the heady wine of contemporary life. Some of the names not yet forgotten, and destined I should hope for long continuance, are those of Bliss Carman, Bertram Goodhue, Fred Bullard, George Hallowell, and Richard Hovey. These all left fine contributions in letters, architecture, music, and painting. There were, however, many others who were vital factors in the fluid and constantly changing association. Tom Meteyard and, after 1900, Dawson Watson, painters; Stephen Townsend, singer of the songs of Hovey and Bullard; Herbert Copeland, Fred Day, Herbert Small, Herbert Stone, Ingalls Kimball, Frank Lee, makers of beautiful books or publishers; J. M. Morton, Phil Savage, Arthur Knapp, "Jimmy" Whitney, Thayer Lincoln, William Lindsay, Robert Babson, "Jack" Abbott, and Hugh McCulloch. And there was always, of course, Louise Imogene Guiney, like a living spirit out of Irish faery tales, and Tom Meteyard's mother, who was mother to us all.

I am quite sure she never realized it and equally sure she would deny it were she living today, but again I am sure that Louise Imogene Guiney was the most vital and creative personal influence in the lives of all of us who gathered together at this time. Certainly this was so in my own case. Daughter of General Patrick Guiney of the Northern Army in the war between the States, she was a good Catholic, a theoretical Jacobite and monarchist, a poet and essayist of singular charm and distinction, and, withal, the best of good fellows. In herself she seemed to concentrate and make operative all the best qualities of the great days of English letters, and this evocative and impelling spirit seemed always to hang over us both as inspiration and as criticism. Every good Irish quality, including fantasy and humour, seemed here incarnate.

I came to know her, through some kindly device of Providence, very early in the game, and it was through her that I came also to know Bernard Berenson. Beardless, and looking like the early portraits of John Keats, he had a diminutive library in his father's house in the West End and there I could forgather with him and discuss Art in its varied aspects. I learned a lot from him and can estimate its value now better than then. Of course we quarrelled delightedly (and have continued to do so ever since, and with equal satisfaction) for even then I was incipiently Gothic, which ran counter to his Renaissance inclinations. These tendencies have intensified over the years, with the result that when, though most unfortunately only at rare intervals, we do get together, the ancient arguments are resumed, with inglorious results, so far as I am concerned; for "B.B." is able to fight on the basis of facts, I only on theories. One case I remember where the issue was joined was as to which of us should succeed Charles Eliot Norton as Professor of Fine Arts at Harvard! Fortunately the vacancy in his chair was prolonged for a considerable time and when it did occur neither of us would have taken the place even if it had been offered; which it was not!

To return to Lou Guiney. At the time of which I am writing she and her mother were living in Auburndale on substantially nothing a year. When President Cleveland made her postmistress of this suburb, the question of maintenance seemed to be adjusted. Unfortunately, however, there rapidly developed a serious complication. The revenue of the postmistress was gauged by the business done in the post office. At first this was sufficient through the sale of stamps, etc., to give the then incumbent a living wage. But suddenly the business began to decline rather alarmingly. Certain Sherlock Holmes procedures on our part revealed what was happening. Auburndale was at that time a favourite retreat of retired Protestant missionaries; the postmistress was a Catholic. The situation was intolerable to the evangelical mind, therefore the Papist incumbent must be driven out by the simple expedient of the transferring of trade to other neighbouring post offices, which was done.

Concerted action on the part of Lou Guiney's friends produced notable results. We all bought postage stamps and other Government paper in such quantities that the Auburndale post office advanced in the matter of business done, and with such leaps and bounds that finally an emissary from the Post Office Department was sent out to ascertain what it all meant. Thereafter, as I remember, the basis on which the salary was determined, was changed to that of a fixed amount. In any case, Lou Guiney held her post without further molestation until the Administration changed, when, of course, in accordance with characteristic American practice, she was ousted.

From distant orbits came from time to time such as Gelett Burgess, Finley Peter Dunn ("Mr. Dooley"), Winthrop Ames, Oliver Herford, Ethelbert Nevin, and artists and singers of the lighter sort, but the first men I have named, who were the real "Visionists" (the most of them), were the active and operative agency. Carman, Goodhue, Bullard, and Hallowell were, I am sure, fired with real genius, but only Carman lived to work out all that was in him;

the others died, not before they could show the temper of their genius, but with the major part unrevealed. This was particularly true of Hallowell whom John Sargent declared the painter with the greatest power and promise in America, and of Bullard, who had time only to hint at what he could do. Bertram Goodhue did indeed reach maturity, both in years and in power, creating and revealing what was almost a new and potentially national style of architecture. If he had but lived another ten years the vitality of his design and the dynamic force of his personality might well have wrought an architectural revolution that would have averted the débâcle of contemporary modernistic art. These names, at least, are secure, but as Sir Thomas has it, "the great part must be content to be as though they had not been; to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man" for "the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity".

This then was the assemblage of ardent youth that saw life then as high adventure, and crusading as a career. There was nothing static in life: all was in motion, and the movement was, we believed (holding still to the established tradition of progressive evolution), inevitably forward. Science and invention were always offering some new thing – electric lighting, rapid transit by trolley cars, the telephone, typewriting machines, steel-frame construction raising its buildings ever higher, with automobiles and phonographs and moving pictures to follow – but while we noted these with a measure of interest, far more significant and eagerly awaited was the next Wagner opera or picture by John Sargent, the arrival of Irving and Terry for a season, a new Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, or another book by Stevenson, Kipling, or du Maurier.

Of course it was quite the thing, at this time, to proclaim the era as one of decadence; indeed the word was capitalized and widely used as a sufficient characterization of the age. This did not disturb us in the least or blur our optimism. Instead we rather gloated over the fact. If the world was indeed decadent, so much louder was the call for crusading. Besides it was rather fun to envisage a crumbling society in which we could look on ourselves as superior beings. We rather revelled in Oscar Wilde and the brilliant and epicene drawings of Aubrey Beardsley. We accented our optimism with the vivacious but really most mistaken idea that we were quite wicked and, to use another tag of the day, *fin de siècle*. We savoured the varied flavours of the cultural menu with relish and altogether thought ourselves monstrously clever fellows – a conception notably lacking in validity.

All this was very superficial, impinging only on the skin. Fundamentally we had, I think, a genuine seriousness both of outlook and of purpose. Religion and sociology made a real appeal. Father Hall was preaching Anglo-Catholicism in the old church on Bowdoin Street and Father Frisby at the Church of the Advent was doing the same, so the anti-Protestant crusade was in full swing. Christian socialism came over from England and some of us even hired a vacant shop in Boylston Street and tried to start a "Church of the Carpenter" that was to follow the Catholic religion but combine with it a socialism that could not but appeal to the working classes – which it conspicuously did not. Those of us who recognized religion as a part of the general scheme of things, were *very* high Church, attaching ourselves to the Catholic congregations in Bowdoin and Brimmer Streets. We were, however, in the minority, for already the abandonment of formal religion was well under way. On the other hand, we were pretty generally monarchist in our political sympathies, for, again, that abandonment of democratic theory and practice which has since gone to such lengths was well begun, though it was still, so to speak, in the Catacombs. Indeed, for a time there was a fully organized local branch of the English Jacobite society, "The Order of the White Rose", and we had our services of mourning and expiation on the Feast of Charles the Martyr and on other "loyalist" days, drank our seditious toasts, sang our Jacobite songs, and even indulged in complimentary (but limited) correspondence with Queen Mary of Bavaria (the "legitimist" English Sovereign), Don Carlos (the "legitimist" King of Spain), and other deposed monarchs. I still treasure my parchment Charter as "Prior" in those American territories lying between the Canadian border and the Rio Grande.

If we were monarchists, we were also, by and large, socialists – at least theoretically and in a bookish sense. This conviction is not so anomalous as it might seem, for just as it is said (and I think with truth) that democracy is possible only where there is a king on his throne, so, as we seem to be discovering today, Socialism is safe, both in itself and in its operations, only under substantially similar conditions; otherwise it degenerates into Communism which, in its turn, always leads to dictatorships. Of this – I mean Communism – happily we knew nothing. I doubt if any one of us had ever read a line of Karl Marx, and the most of us had not even heard his name. We were Socialists because we were young enough to have generous impulses. We were William-Morris enough to hate industrialism, and were rebellious enough to want to attach ourselves to something new and not as yet accorded that popular favour that was so soon to follow in more fashionable circles.

Altogether it was a great moment in history, not only for our own small group in Boston, but in actuality. High hopes, definite ambitions, certainty of achievement, and lightness of heart, created an atmosphere of which one could breathe deeply. There was no sign, no cloud, even the smallest, on the horizon of destiny; no indication (and fortunately) of the coming era of big business, mass production and high finance, of labour wars, racketeering, gangsterism, and wholesale kidnapping. A war in which America would be involved, even a little one like that with Spain, then coming close, was unthinkable. As for a World War exceeding in magnitude and devastation any of those in the past; the money-madness and gamblers' paradise, the complete break-down of our social, moral, and economic system, the disintegration of Europe under the red light of a new Terror; Communist interludes of anarchy and massacre, with kings hurled from their thrones only to be followed by dictators in half the states of the world; an American President taking, or accepting, such powers over men and things as none other had ever held or dreamed of holding – as for such a farrago of lunatic impossibilities, the maddest of us all would never have conceived of anything of the kind, or if in some delirium inventing such devastating absurdities, would not have mentioned them aloud for fear of the process, "De lunatico inquirendo".

Yes, a great age, and one that should have furnished fertile ground for the germination of great personalities. Why it did not is a cosmic mystery, the solution of which is still to seek.

I wonder if, perhaps, the theory that goes back even to Egypt and Babylonia, and has haunted the imaginations of speculative philosophers ever since, may give the solution? I mean the doctrine that there is an implacable rhythm in life, a periodical rise and fall like the waves of the sea, that, measured by nodal points fixed at intervals of five hundred years, guarantees an ascent at the beginning of each measured era that is inevitably followed by a corresponding fall. If this is so, then our own age, which began with the year 1500, must come to its end by the year 2000; and however ardent and aspiring the individuals that came to birth during the last century or so of the five-hundred-year period, they must fail of fruition since they rode on the sweep of the declining wave. Certainly the record of the elapsed years of the present century would seem to give colour to such a theory, while it would explain the abortive results of so many of those lives that opened with high hopes during the half-century of which I am now recovering the fast-fading memory.

The Future of Capitalism

A Note on Werner Sombart

W. P. Witcutt

THE name of Werner Sombart is little known in English-speaking countries. On the Continent of Europe – in France, Germany, and Italy – he is known and appreciated as the greatest contemporary authority on the Capitalist system, its history, its present nature and extent, and its future prospects. Secretary of the Bremen Chamber of Commerce, then Professor at Breslau, finally Professor at Berlin University, he has devoted his life to the study of the Capitalist system; and better than any other man of our time, he should be able to forecast its future. The results of his work are to be found in three huge volumes – Sombart's *Moderne Kapitalismus* – none of which has yet been translated into English, despite the fact that some consider them to form the most notable work on economics published during this century.

Sombart's chief characteristic is his objectivity. No one would be able to tell for certain, from a perusal of his work, whether he is for Capitalism or against it, though one might guess. My personal opinion is that he really hates the system, yet has a great admiration for it.

By Capitalism Sombart, like Belloc, does not mean the régime of private property, as opposed to Socialism. He does not give any formal definition of Capitalism, but indicates certain constituent elements; which may be gathered under the following headings. The Capitalist system consists:

(1) of a society stratified into possessors of capital, entrepreneurs, and workers pure and simple, possessing nothing – proletarians;

(2) in the intensive utilization of mineral wealth. "The exploitation of the riches beneath the earth's surface and modern Capitalism are at bottom different aspects (natural and social) of one and the same phenomenon."

The entrepreneur (director of an "enterprise") is the chief factor in the Capitalist system. "It is the Capitalist entrepreneur, and he alone, who constitutes the motive power of modern Capitalist economy." One may take the motor magnates – Ford, Morris, Austin – as typical examples. Sombart takes the entrepreneur under his microscope, classifies him into his various sub-species, and discusses the reasons for his activities. This section is amusing by reason of its perfect detachment and impartiality.

"In the Capitalist economy the entrepreneurs form the sole nucleus of intelligent men", working on the inert mass of consumers by the forces of suggestion supplied by modern advertising. This nucleus is really incredibly small. By means of the interlocking methods of modern finance, a few men control the economic life of the Capitalist world.

"When Walther Rathenau said one day that the whole economic life of Europe and America was directed by 300 or 400 men, he was reproached with having given away a secret. But for those who knew more or less the organization of modern economic life, the fact revealed by Rathenau was far from being a secret."

The chief characteristic of the Capitalist method of production is its increasing "dehumanization". "When the workman goes into the factory he must leave his soul at the entrance." He becomes part of the mechanism. Under the twin systems of Taylorism and mass-production this system is pushed almost to its furthest extent.* The completely automatic factory run by a few highly-skilled technicians would appear to be the term of this development; but Sombart considers this inapplicable to all industries. Some, it is to be presumed, will have to remain in a state of Taylorization.

As usual, Sombart gets the insect under the microscope, and proceeds to investigate the why and wherefore of its action; *i.e.*, the reasons for this dehumanization – chiefly reduction of the cost of production, and greater independence with regard to the workmen. The human factor is abolished as far as possible.

Sombart does not think that the present world-crisis will destroy Capitalism. He regards it as "a simple crisis of markets, such as follows every great war". True, he was writing in 1928. But there is no reason to think that he has changed his opinion.

As always, he gives a set of reasons. (The delightful thing about Sombart is that, like a scholastic philosopher, he always attempts to prove what he asserts.) Pride in the technical accomplishments of Capitalism will be a very potent cause for the maintenance of the system.

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* Taylorism is the system by which every action of the workman is laid down beforehand. "Pick up the brick in the left hand and at the same instant take a trowelful of mortar with the right hand." These actions have to be performed at a fast and uniform rate.

Nevertheless he considers that Capitalism will play a very much less important part in world economy in the future. As a matter of fact, the Capitalist system is at present far less widespread than is generally supposed. As recently as 1907 there were 5 million "small men" engaged in industry in Germany, as opposed to 8 million proletarians. And the peasant economy still covers most of the globe.

Sombart adduces the following reasons for considering that Capitalism has reached its term of expansion, and that in future it will, if not actually decline, at least petrify. The gain-spirit is not so strong; the entrepreneur has not so much scope in the present régime of cartels and trusts; Capitalism is undergoing a bureaucratizing process.

"All these facts constitute, if one loves comparisons, the phenomena of approaching old age: the first tooth to fall out, the first manifestation of embonpoint, the first white hair."

Economic organizations which aim, not at the realization of gain, but the satisfaction of needs, will assume greater and greater importance – co-operative and public organizations. These will to a great extent use the technical achievements of Capitalism, and in particular, the dehumanization of production. "They will subsist by the will of numerous strata of the population – workmen and poor consumers – who would free themselves from the chains of Capitalism."

But, says Sombart, there is really very little to choose between the ethos of these Socialistic and semi-Socialistic concerns, and that of Capitalism. "What difference is there between a great co-operative store and a great Capitalist store, between a Communist blast-furnace and a Capitalist blast-furnace? . . . That is why the question of knowing whether the economic life of the future will be organized on a Capitalist basis or upon Socialist principles, whether men will be roasted or boiled, is of very little importance. The important thing is to know whether men will escape boiling as well as roasting, that is, whether there will be any place in the economy of the future for systems which are neither Capitalist nor Socialist – for individualist economy, for craftsmanship, for the peasant economy. It is a question of the opposition of two worlds. The future of humanity depends upon the issue of the war between these two worlds."

Agriculture will always remain "a sort of oasis" for those who desire to escape from Capitalism and Socialism and thereby retain their souls intact, for "the complete dehumanization of agriculture is impossible".

"One can be occupied in agriculture for the love of agriculture; one can acquire landed property for the love of the soil. Can that be said of a commercial enterprise, of a blast furnace or a factory for the manufacture of sulphuric acid?"

The peasant economy will increase in expanse and importance. Each country will be obliged to reconstruct its agrarian basis. "Economic monstrosities like the English national economy, with eight per cent of the people on the land and living for the most part on interest paid on capital invested abroad, will, in the future, be impossible."

The Mimetic Principle

John Crowe Ransom

The Greeks were not provided with a technical vocabulary with which to philosophize. Probably that is the attainment of races quite advanced in their linguistic. One of the consequences of this deficiency must have been that a well-spoken Greek could always feel free to do a little philosophizing as he passed. But another consequence was that you could never be sure at first sight just how philosophically some term was being employed. Did it bear a popular figurative racy sense, as if intending just to make the most of the single occasion, or did it intend to be used definitively and systematically in a close piece of reasoning? You had to have a good deal of the context to decide.

Katharsis was such a term – a medical word adapted by Aristotle to the description of the effect of tragedy. It is a hard word for the lovers and respecters of art to have to come to. It reflects the patronizing view of certain natural scientists, who have strenuous programmes in view for humanity, and tolerate the arts only for medical or sanitary reasons, and in consideration for the present weak state of the racial mind. (In the same way we have seen systems of legalized and regulated prostitution, meant to take charge of an excess of certain primitive energies; and systems of legalized and restricted liquor dispensaries.) It is tempting to think that Aristotle in springing his famous term upon the doctrinaires of poetry might have been only remarking something like this: "Tragedy certainly brings out the terror and the pity, no matter how hard the spectator is; it acts on these emotions as a dose of cathartic acts on the contents of the long intestine." And that would be all there was to it, though we might raise a question of his good taste. But no; Aristotle keeps using the word, returning to it, till we are obliged to concede that it has become a deliberate and technical term in his theory. He means it.

Even so, the ingenious interpreter – Butcher, Quiller-Couch, or one of thousands of our professors of literature – will undertake to save tragedy, by the curious process of saving Aristotle from being a disparager of tragedy. For instance, by claiming that Aristotle never meant by *katharsis* to purge the soul of the terror and pity that were in the soul, but to purge these emotions of certain unholy elements (unspecified) which were in the emotions. But the harder we try to figure what this interpretation can mean, the more comical the image becomes; and, whatever the intellectual character of the interpreters may be, we know that Aristotle was not silly. Furthermore, he was fairly explicit. He justified tragedy and certain forms of music because they purged the soul of certain noxious emotions, namely, fear, pity, and enthusiasm; and we know from many other contexts that he wanted the soul to be purged and clean, so that it might be up and doing, having in fact very splendid things before it to do.

The other great term in the Aristotelian aesthetic is likewise strange-sounding; it is *mimesis*, which certainly means imitation. It is not Aristotle's own term for the artistic act; he inherited it from Plato, and perhaps Plato took it out of the air. The identification of art with *mimesis*, the imitation of nature, was so fixed that the Greeks could not quite admit architecture into the company of the fine arts; on the ground that it was too industrial, not wanting simply to imitate nature, which would be to respect it, but to improve upon nature and use it.

I imagine *mimesis* was not such an obvious discovery, not a disparaging one, and not without extreme significance for theory. We are told that human infants and all beasts are without the power to distinguish the image in the painting from the original. Our infants learn later to make that distinction as a matter of course, but it is sometimes hard for them to conceive the painter as a man who deliberately seeks effects with an imitation which he cannot obtain with the original. If they form the idea of the artist as an imitator, it is probably to the effect that he finds the imitation convenient because it is portable and inexpensive; he can manage with it when he cannot get access to the original. The playwright can hardly arrange for a murder to be enacted as a public spectacle, but he may have one imitated on the stage. Many modern persons think it ought to be as "realistic" there as possible, with screams and gore, so that the spectator may forget it is only an imitation; whereas the Greek population liked their plays produced under severe restrictions which did not permit the spectator to be so stupid even if he wanted to; plays that were imitations undisguised.

Returning to the painting: it perhaps does not occur to naïve persons that some painter from his window will command permanently his view of the city roofs, and yet be impelled to paint the imitation of it on a canvas beside the window, and to return again and again to the canvas in preference to the window as the occasion of his aesthetic experience. The studied aesthetician will admit to this fact, but will contend perhaps that the painting is better for the purpose than the view from the window because the painting has suppressed something, or added something, or distorted something; being quite unable to conceive that its superiority may lie in the simple fact that it is the imitation of something rather than the original. We may do anything we like with real nature, but we can only enjoy, or receive aesthetically, its imitation.

Unanimously, when the world of Greek art had come into being, and the age of reflection had arrived, the Greeks looked at the rich profusion and said, "This looks like imitation". If any testimony was lacking, Aristotle, colder and more objective in his views than most, was ready to supply it; he concurred with the other witnesses. The doctrine of *mimesis* was the foundation of the Greek aesthetic; it is probably the best foundation for any aesthetic. If it is dwelt upon, it will prompt within a little while all the important questions. Thus: What is the ontological status of an imitation as compared with original nature? What is its motive in terms of the will and affections? How does it contrast with the peculiar treatment which science gives to nature? What degree of accuracy and fidelity to detail is required in an imitation? Does the theory of imitation consist with our impression that a work of art is a work of "imagination" or "creation"? Finally (though these are not necessarily all the questions) there is a characteristic Aristotelian question: what good does it do to man, the lord of nature, the intelligence which is so much higher than nature? Some of the problems immediately suggested by *mimesis* are exquisitely formulated by Bosanquet in the Third Chapter of his *History of Aesthetic*. But the Greeks, in failing to develop these problems, seem to be a disappointment to him. I think he goes too fast, and fails to receive the simple or commonsense meaning which the thing had for them. (He has his Hegelian legacy of "concrete idealism" painfully in his consciousness, and is not quite free.)

Aristotle was an honest natural scientist, ambitious for the perfection of the human mind in rationality, yet prepared to countenance whatever was common; he for his part looked over the Grecian artifacts, and round him like a shrewd anthropologist at human nature everywhere, and remarked that the love of imitation must be one of the universal human traits. We need not imagine that he regarded it as a fine one. But everybody liked to imitate; it was one of the specific marks of human nature, not found among the lower animals. And apparently the encounter with a good imitation gave pleasure, analogous perhaps to the pleasure given by a good scientific demonstration. A person recognized the object — in a painting, for example — and exclaimed, "This is the very man." Aristotle does not tell us what the speaker would have said upon making a corresponding identification in the work of science. But since the work of science is a work of classification in terms of universals, not a work of imitation in terms of particulars, Aristotle would certainly have found the speaker exclaiming, "This is the sort of person he is," or, "This is the very class for such an object." The 'Εκεῖνος (*ekeinos*) recognized in the imitation would become the οἷος (*hoios*) of the scientific description.

The distinction is one to be made and sensed powerfully; without it there is no difference between the characteristic activities of science and art. One of the features of Platonism, as in a different way of Aristotelianism, is its passionate preference for universals over particulars. It was because art was concerned with particulars that Plato rejected it, in those moments when he had the courage of his convictions, and banished the poets from his Republic. But Aristotle does not reject art; he is merely cold to it.

Idealism, the passion for universals, is so strong that it does not stop at trying to appropriate art for its own purpose; the purpose being the communication of the ideas; of ideas and ideality in general, or of those special ideas which have a regulative or moral value in the determination of the persons who will receive them. Plato is a good example of the idealist surveying art with respect to both these uses.

He was interested first in a system of archetypal and ruling ideas which he contemplated with a fervour that was religious, or mystical, or metaphysical, or all at once. He objectified his universals into gods, and thought of particulars as little creations thrown off by these splendid first causes. Aristotle was not so polite as this to the universals; he regarded them as only immanent in the particulars, yet, for practical purposes, as the indispensable instruments by which the mind acquired its hold of natural law and ordered the universe. Plato, Aristotle, the Hegelians, and many others related and unrelated, are quite alike in being unable to attach their interest to mere particulars, and disposed always to use them as the beginnings of a process of knowledge destined to go "higher", "behind", or "further"; accordingly rather resentful of the seeming acquiescence of artists in particulars as something crude and philistine. Plato was an aggressive idealist with a head full of Big Ideas, and he could see no sense in the artist's imitation of natural objects as if that were something to do. And he could not discover that the artist was doing anything else. I suggest that the artist is not necessarily doing anything else.

Plato was also a moralist; but what is a moralist? A moralist is a valuable but pedestrian species of idealist; his interest is not in the private, particular, and characteristic, but in one variety of the standard, universal, and ideal. What Plato as moralist would have asked of the artist seemed not to involve any fatal concession. Let him imitate decent things and moral persons, in order to induce moral interests in the public audience. Plato could have used some good moral art in his Republic, when he was tinkering with its educational scheme. So can Aristotle, who also has an educational scheme, but he knows better than to discuss it under the head of aesthetic. (Aesthetic is as ultimate a term as moral. It is questionable whether the Republic can stand for the subordination of aesthetic to moral, or vice versa for that matter, in the education of its citizens at one stage or another; whether the didacticism which college Seniors resent in the presentation of the arts ought not to be resented also by small boys in grammar schools.) But Plato could not lay his hands on the artists who would cooperate with him in this worthy purpose. Homer played him false. The modern Plato will say of course, "Hire the artist." Unfortunately the hireling artists are not generally the best artists, they do not turn out well; what they gain in ideality they lose in particularity and verisimilitude, and nature is not fairly imitated. You cannot make a contract with your artist, or if you do you cannot enforce it. If dedicated in the first place to the imitation of nature, then he will have to let morality take its chance in the exhibit.

In the name of their high and mighty causes, the world's moralists have always wanted to coerce the artists, and failing that to canonize or excommunicate them according to performance. Each age has its examples of this termagant Platonism. Today it is perhaps the admirable Neo-Humanists who most deserve, in view of their eminence, to be cited. They censor literature on the basis of its conformity with Aristotelian ethics, a course upon which Aristotle himself had not the temerity to venture. There was Mr. Babbitt. And now there is Mr. Shafer, in the Summer Number of the REVIEW, defining with an inevitable orthodoxy the function of literary scholarship, and commending what he strangely regards as a "new movement" that is actually practising it:

> Literature has never been, is not, and, for better or for worse, can never be simply a photographic reflection of life. As an art it unescapably interprets life, directly or by implication, in re-creating it. Hence there is always present—deeply and darkly imbedded it may be, but, still, actively present—in literature of whatsoever kind a hard core or backbone of philosophical ideas. And it is

this central characteristic of literature which gives it importance and makes it a uniquely valuable means of liberal education. The revolutionary movement under discussion, moreover, is simply a determined effort to act in accordance with this fact, to study and teach literature in close relation with philosophical ideas and their vicissitudes. Many students, to be sure, have long been concerned with the history of thought and with its critical presentation. What is new and, indeed, nothing less than revolutionary is the attempt to bring philosophical ideas, in the broadest sense of the term, and literature together, for the light each may shed on the other.

I am not sure how new this last sort of thing is; nearly every systematic application of scholarship as we understand the term today is relatively new; but the study of literature with some sort of respect to its philosophical ideas is hoary with age. The scholars involved in it are the faithful old horses that turn the ancient mill.

On the other hand, one knows that Neo-Humanism is too various and living a movement to be confined within this practice. I recall reading long ago some passage from a Shelburne essay in which Mr. More cited feelingly a bit of "romantic" verse about nature, and made only a little remark, which was to this effect: "Here we have that strange beauty so dear to the modern spirit." His refusal to go further seemed eloquent of the conviction that in a case like this no "hard core of philosophical ideas" was discoverable. He was confronted with a simple piece of imitation which was self-sufficient, and deprived missionary idealists of their professional function.

Aristotle did not talk about art as an imitation of nature trying surreptitiously to convey the metaphysical "Behind-nature"; that is, suggesting Big Ideas, or a Higher Reality, or a Concrete Universal or Absolute. It simply didn't. Nor did he regard art as entertaining that easier and not less noble project, the communication of moral universals. Nor, finally, did he think of it as a handmaiden to science (which he loved), busying itself in supplying case-illustrations for common universals of any sort. He was a fairer surveyor of art-works than some modern sociologists of my acquaintance who use contemporary literature as their case-book, and seem to think it was composed for this express purpose and their express benefit. Fairer than many professors of literature, who solicit the acquiescence of their colleagues in the study of letters on the ground that it teaches so much history, economics, biology, philosophy, and psychology. It is true that any particular, including the one imitated in the art-work, will illustrate a number of universal laws, but it exists in its own right and not for the sake of illustration. An illustration is just an instance, but an art-object is an individual.

I am aware that it is commonly said, by Butcher for example, that Aristotle required the artistic imitation to emphasize the typical and to eliminate the local and characteristic; which would be, precisely, to pass into the mode of being an instance or illustration. I do not think this is so. The imitation had to look natural and not strange; that is about the substance of Aristotle on this point. If poetry is truer than history in his estimation, it is because of his understanding of history. History is either a compilation of marvels, as in Herodotus, whom Aristotle cites, or it is science pursuing a thread of ideas by an abstraction as perfect as possible; in neither sense an imitation of nature. Compare it with fiction; or compare the documentary sources of Shakespeare's *Histories* with the thing he at last learned to make of them when he freed the imitative or imaginative impulse from deference to what we call historical "authority". Aristotle asserts that the hero must not be too wonderful or we shall not find him like enough to ourselves to arouse the pity and the terror; that is, to feel the force of an imitation. His discussions of probability are by way of improvising a sort of calculus of verisimilitude.

There are two ways of transcribing nature, and between them they exhaust the possibilities of perfect cognition. One is by the graphs or formulas that record the universal relations, the "cores of constancy", in nature; and very useful instruments they are, constituting all that we know as science. The word physics means "naturalism", or the knowledge of nature; it is clear that the scientific transcript has monopolized the great name. The other transcript is by imitations or full representations of nature, and these are the works of art. The two forms are highly specialized; they have been so doubtless in any society civilized enough to leave its records behind. Thus the scientist knows how to interest himself strictly in the universals; he admits no individuals into his attention, except as the initiation of new studies or the verification of old ones. The artist interests himself entirely in individuals, or he should; if he does not really, he should declare himself a scientist or a moralist. But – I must hasten to say this – if he is of mature and observant mind his individuals are likely to be rich and suggestive; tempting the scientist, and the critic infirm of aesthetic purpose, to translate them into generalities and in doing so to lose them as individuals.

Mimesis is as much a passion as science; perhaps it would be more dignified to say as normal and human. It aims at a kind of cognition which is unknown to pure science and which grows increasingly difficult for us in practical life. It wants to recover its individuals, abandoned in science, in business, and in affairs. It has a right to them, since they are there. Individuals are ultimate, Aristotle conceded, though the interest he took in them was cursory; he had a temperamental deficiency, and many moralists, scientists, and philosophers share it with him.

Here is a book of physics, filled with characteristic scientific transcripts of nature. And here is a page packed systematically with symbolic denotations, some of them numerals, others letters, both Greek and English. It is a ballistic table, telling the path a bullet will take when fired from a gun, through miles of air resistance; under what skies, we wonder, over what conformations of landscape, towards the heart of a person having what personality? The transcript is perfectly silent about such details, about "setting"; it is not proposing to imitate nature. In arriving at it, as we gather from the story, the scientists used a great many particulars, but only under the aspect of "cases"; that is, with an eye not for their particularity but for their generality; putting them in fact into laboratories and stripping off as much particularity as human wit could manage. And now that the transcript is complete, the particulars are dismissed, and the mind rests in its lordly table of universals. Or perhaps there is another use for it; perhaps we are going to shoot a bullet. We give the bullet the direction and velocity that the table prescribes, and the calculation succeeds; "beautifully", I think the word is; the bullet goes home. But even in this crowning operation the bullet, the gun, and the enemy himself are without individuality for us. The bullet for example is any bullet in its class; as meek a little instance as ever experienced the stupendous exaltation of being subsumed under its class concept. In this case, as throughout our practice, the object we attend to is just as abstract as the rule by which we handle it. The particularity of nature is certainly not a property which we are forced to be at pains to respect.

But apparently we return periodically to nature for precisely this purpose. Here is another transcript — an imitation of nature representing, let us say, to make the example as easy as possible, a landscape in water-colours. The thing recorded here is an infinite degree of particularity. If we care to attend to it, it is by a labour of love, for we cannot possibly use it. We trace its configurations, colours, planes, objects, till we are satisfied; that is, till we have received the sense of how infinite this particularity may be. It is probably a wholesome exercise for us, since it may help to keep us sane and "realistic" beneath the incessant bombardment of bragging public universals; it improves our understanding of nature. But we do not have to improvise a motive. We are drawn to the painting by an interest which, as Aristotle said, is common to mankind but not given to the beasts. We are sensible of the love behind all the labour that the patient artist has put into his work, and we respond with ours.

I use the term love not too fearfully. The motive for engaging upon the other kind of transcript is glory, according to the metaphysical idealists; duty, according to the moralists; power, according to the practical scientists; and, for the appetites, greed. It is a single series, and as opposite to love at one place as another.

One of the trick questions in aesthetic suggests itself here, with its proper answer in terms of Greek *mimesis.* Why would not a photograph of the landscape be superior to the painting? The idea is that the photograph would be both fuller and more accurate as a representation. But it is not fuller, strictly speaking; to be particular at all is to be infinitely full of detail, and one infinite is as full as another. And it does not matter about the meticulous accuracy of representation; the painter's free version may be for the eye the more probable version and the more convincing, by the same reasoning by which Aristotle prefers poetry as an imitation to history. The great difference between the two versions lies elsewhere. The photograph is a mechanical imitation perhaps but not a psychological one. It was obtained by the adjustment of the camera and the pressing of the button, actions so characterless that they indicate no attitude necessarily, no love; but the painting reveals the arduous pains of the artist. We are excited by these pains proportionately; they give the painting its human value; and carrying this principle a little further, we never discover in the work a single evidence of technique, discipline, deliberation, without having the value enhanced further. The pains measure the love.

Artists have left massive labours behind them; they are still at work. The imitative impulse may be disparaged, but it takes a pretty pitch of arrogance to deny it, or to propose to strip it from the various context of the human will. Aristotle did not have that kind of recklessness.

Nevertheless I am very much interested in a final question: what would be the connection between *katharsis*, the medical function of certain arts, and *mimesis*, the impulse behind the arts in general, including the most innocent ones? I am afraid there is an ominous connection.

Disapproving terror, pity, and enthusiasm, Aristotle authorized a specific horrendous art and a specific orgiastic music to purge off these emotions periodically and fit the spectator for responsible public life as citizen, scientist, worker, or whatever career was sober and desirable. But the artistic impulse was ubiquitous. It gave rise to arts of all sorts, big ones and little ones, here and there; based simply on the imitation of nature, and that did not seem so direful a thing; yet it meant the love of nature, and that positively reversed the ordinary relation that Aristotle desired between man and environment.

He left the arts standing; he sanctioned them. But perhaps this course was subtler than it seems, and not merely an acquiescence. Did not the arts, with their discharge of love in so many harmless conventional forms, act as cathartics to purify the souls of citizens? I believe so; I mean that probably this was the action imputed to them by Aristotle, and also that it was imputed with reason. For the worst thing about our situation as civilized beings – it grows worse with the extent of our civilization – is that we vent our love of nature not in the usual actions of living but in the random and occasional moments when we indulge ourselves in the special arts; that the arts are intercalary and non-participating experiences in respect to the "serious" side of life; and that most of the time we are not human, so far as it is a mark of the human dignity to respect and know the particularity by which we are so constantly environed. We live, by inveterate habit now, abstractedly. If we were better men we might do with less of art, for we should take care to find aesthetic enjoyment in everything we were doing. But we should probably also have to do with less of science; that is, with an impure and less effective science.

The doctrine of *katharsis* denies nothing human, but it is far from being indifferent or non-partisan as between the modes of human activity. Its object is to intensify the aesthetic moment in order to minimize it, and clear the way for the scientific moment.

Property and Tactics

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LONG a believer in the ownership of property by the masses, the present writer doubts whether the means adopted by the so-called Distributist Movement under Belloc and Chesterton are well adapted to the end.

Certainly proletarianism is the cause of the present social instability. How could any social order be free from strain with many millions of propertyless families throughout the industrial districts of the world who are supposed to be full and free citizens, equal in legal rights with the richest multimillionaire? And certainly Belloc in *The Servile State* is right in saying that there are only two stable solutions for this instability: property or slavery. Probably all readers of these lines will agree that property is the nobler and more desirable solution. With admirable clearness and pertinacity these propositions have been set forth and defended by Belloc, G. K. C., and their followers, notably Herbert Agar. "It is to take off the hat" as years ago a certain Italian was heard to say while saluting a statue of Garibaldi.

But after coming so far in perfect agreement, differences begin to appear.

First of all there are the vast dissimilarities between Britain and America. In America you have an active, mercurial populace subject to cyclones of mob emotion; in England comparatively sleepy and dreamy masses unaccustomed to active participation in government, accustomed to guidance from above in accordance with the aristocratic tradition of the island. Much the same contrast is found in the armed experience and habit of the two countries: the British police go unarmed, and for centuries before the Boer War England had never raised more than small professional armies, while American policemen have always been armed, the United States have made a number of considerable military efforts and are accustomed to violent civil tumults. Concerning property, the dissimilarity is equally great: in England ever since the Middle Ages and especially since the fall of Charles I, the idea that the average family should own land or other productive capital has gradually dwindled away. Economic independence has always been the American ideal, until yesterday that ideal was realized in practice by the enormous majority of white citizens, today it is realized by many if not most, and where it has been lost it remains a vivid memory. An English friend of the Distributists, Christopher Hollis, in *The American Heresy* has blamed the United States for partially turning away from the ideal of economic independence through ownership; and indeed proletarian, servile tendencies have increased among us for a generation, rising to a crescendo under Franklin Roosevelt. But for centuries in England before the Chester-Belloc movement even the ideal of property for the average family seems to have been forgotten.

Now Distributism began in England. Its leaders, although they well know the dissimilarity between the eastern and western shores of the Atlantic, have written as if for an exclusively English audience. Certainly no decent American will complain because Belloc and G. K. C. are patriotic Englishmen, none the less this nationalism of theirs may produce misunderstanding.

One American misunderstanding springs from the Distributist use of the term capitalism. Outside of Soviet Russia, the present economic and social systems are known as "capitalist"; they safeguard the private ownership of productive capital by individuals and corporations while at the same time they include vast proletarian masses. Distributists, attacking "capitalism", say that they do so in order to re-establish property for the masses. If we allow them their own definition of the word "capitalism" then they are right. In the first section of *The Servile State* Belloc writes: "A society in which private property in land and capital, that is, the ownership and therefore the control of the means of production, is confined to some number of free citizens not large enough to determine the social mass of the State, while the rest have not such property and are therefore proletarian, we call Capitalist." Whether this definition suits with current British usage I do not know; one is liable to error in judging a foreign society even where one knows that society fairly well. Apparently the Jew, Mordecai, who called himself Karl Marx used the term capitalism in this Bellocian sense. But not one educated American in a hundred thus interprets the word. Ask Americans what they mean by it and they will answer with one voice: "The private ownership of productive property."

To change the accepted meaning of words is an almost impossible task, not to be undertaken unless as a duty demanded by conscience, and in the present case no point of conscience appears. Obviously the thing that Distributists really attack is not capitalism in the current sense of private property at all. By definition they are out to defend property and to extend its possession. Their enemy is proletarianism, the absence of productive property among the industrial masses. But when they say they are attacking "capitalism" the average American instantly concludes that they are against private property. Indeed the present writer suspects the existence of the same misunderstanding in England, but even if it be confined to the United States the verbal confusion is serious enough.

Moreover this confusion is increased by socialist and communist propaganda. Irrespective of what Karl Marx meant by "capitalism", today his disciples everywhere use the word in the same sense as the American man in the street. Sometimes they may try to dupe people into believing that socialism attacks not private property itself but only its abuses such as the great wealth of modern communities existing side by side with masses of poverty. When they can find millionaires to denounce, they prefer to denounce them, leaving the land-owning farmer and the independent craftsman temporarily unmolested. But such tactics are only a blind; compared with a small owner your communist Commissar is own brother to a capitalist Trust Magnate directing his mass of wage earners. The Russian communists have merely carried the concentration of industry one step further; they have merged all the mergers and have "trustified" all the trusts into one which they call the Soviet Government. When they were trying to gain power their denunciations of the rich meant to the small owner only the Cyclops's promise to Ulysses, the privilege of being eaten last. Indeed Distributists have forcibly argued that small property rather than large is the real enemy of communism. Thus the communist profits from the confusion as to the term "capitalism", and to prolong that confusion is to play into his hands.

Distributists may also play the communists' game by too sweepingly denouncing the existing order. Emphasize existing abuses as much as you like, still capitalism has never tried to suppress public worship or the teaching of religion. It has never made laws against private property, exiling and murdering millions for the crime of ownership. If it has drifted far from many wholesome traditions, at least it has never declared war to the knife against all tradition. All these things communism has done.

There is never room for more than two in a fight. A third party, unless far stronger than both original combatants put together, can only assist one of the original two. Throughout the world our capitalist order, with all its sins upon its head, is under attack from the atheist fury of communism. That order might be improved, the number of owners might be increased without the horrors and abominations of communist revolution and Soviet government. But suppose it could not be improved. Suppose we had to choose between Moscow as it is and London or New York as they are. Would any Distributist choose Moscow?

Turning now to specific proposals for increasing the number of owners, Belloc's paper "On Usury" in his book *Essays of a Catholic* rejects as impracticable the idea of putting down usury or of distinguishing between usurious and non-usurious loans. By implication, therefore, he would reject as still more impracticable the far more complex and difficult business of re-introducing the Just Price. Instead of trying these mediaeval methods, he has proposed in his articles *The Restoration of Property* that the state should by taxation take money from wealthy citizens and give it to other poorer citizens in the hope of turning the latter into small owners. There is a certain inconsistency in his thought, for almost in the same breath he truly calls heavy taxation an enemy to the idea of property. Now heavy taxes already exist, and to add to them the further cost of subsidizing possible small owners would result in very high taxation indeed. Nor could the burden be laid chiefly upon millionaires, there are not enough of them to go around. It would have to cut even more deeply into all moderate fortunes than at present. In practice all heavy taxes, even when steeply graduated, bear far more harshly upon small accumulations than upon large ones. Moreover the present graduated taxes, although often praised by fools as means for lessening economic inequality, do nothing to increase the number of small owners. On the contrary they diminish them because the various government doles and pension schemes discourage saving and encourage improvidence. The tax moneys are either paid out in wages to armies of petty officials and government servants or go into the pockets of wealthy contractors and other powerful "friends of government", that is friends of the politicians. By contrast, the French and American custom of distributing estates equally among the children at the death of the owner is a real distributor of property. As a child the writer was taught an old American saying: "One great fortune makes four comfortable incomes; one comfortable income makes four modest competencies; a modest competency will not divide."

Passing over the inconsistency between Belloc's advocacy of subsidies to small owners and his condemnation of high taxes as inimical to property, let us consider the proposed subsidies on their merits. With great respect the writer submits that they are neither wise nor just.

The cement of society is justice but for the sake of peace human justice must respect prescriptive, vested right. If you suddenly and severely disturb custom, the result is disorder for which the only remedy is force. Our democratic – or, if you prefer, "so-called democratic"– era has shown little respect for prescriptive right. Significantly, the scale and intensity of its wars have been approached only by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Religious Wars and by the period preceding Augustus.

It is quite true that prescriptive right is not the same thing as ideal justice. If a certain act was evil then the passage of time cannot make that evil good. But prescriptive right is necessary to the maintenance of social order. Suppose a man living upon a fortune founded by his great-grandfather. He buys a house, and then suppose the state steps in and says "You have no right to that house because your great grandfather has just been discovered to have been a thief!" Even if the sixteenth-century confiscation of English monastic lands was a wicked act, this would not justify their re-confiscation from their present owners.

Granted freely that the contrast between proletarianism and great fortunes is an evil thing which in practice makes for social instability, still the great fortunes of today are protected by prescriptive right. For the state to pillage them and then to parcel out the pillage among a number of poor men would be mere legalized theft. In the words of Irving Babbitt: "You cannot attack wealth without attacking property, and you cannot attack property without attacking common honesty." On a large scale a shock of this kind would so upset such stability as remains that it would do more harm than good.

Suppose the corner turned and the confiscation effected without civil war, chaos, and disorder: would the receivers of the pillage turn into frugal, economical small owners? They are far more likely to consume this gift from the gods in record time, trusting to another government hand-out when supplies run short. Instead of more respect for property they will have less. Man usually values and respects that for which he has laboured, he often respects that which has been left him by his ancestors, how can he respect that which is dumped into his lap by a government department? The root of the difficulty is the irresponsible proletarian mentality. Propertyless masses exist where people would rather spend than save, where they prefer immediate enjoyment to independence. Where that mentality does not exist, for instance in France and Denmark, we find small property preserved for generations without confiscation, in the teeth of Usury, and without means of enforcing the Just Price. But how could legalized theft raise a proletariat to self-respect and the arduous love of independence?

Let us take the case of the U. S. Steel Corporation, whose connection with its workmen is certainly closer than that of the average modern man with his government. Desiring to encourage the ownership of its stock by its workmen, the Corporation has for years maintained a fund to purchase its own stock and sell it to employees at a price less than the prevailing market price. Many of the latter simply buy the stock and promptly resell it at the market price for the sake of the profit thus obtainable.

Turning now from Belloc to Chesterton, we often see in him an anti-social and subversive mood. I will confine myself to a few examples. In his last chapter of *The Scandal of Father Brown*, G. K. C. creates a character called Tiger Tyrone, a thief who delights to combine theft with sacrilege. Of this fellow we find these words written:

> Meanwhile Father Brown had slipped into the chapel, to say a prayer for several persons involved in these unseemly events. But he was rather smiling than otherwise, and, to tell the truth, he was not by any means hopeless about Mr. Tyrone . . . ; but rather more hopeful than he was for many more respectable people.

Now of course there may have been individual thieves of whom such words would have been justified. They would certainly have been justified of the Penitent Thief whom Our Lord absolved from the Cross. Nor is respectability identical with eternal salvation. But for the reader the characters created by a talented author are not only individuals; they are also types of humanity. In a sense the old Aristotelian tag rightly describes them as truer even than real people, for characters in fiction – so that they may be credible – must conform to the general truths of common experience, whereas many real people are so odd that in fiction they would not be credible at all. Accordingly readers are justified in taking a writer's attitude toward his characters as indicating his philosophy of conduct, in short his morals.

Two other more pronounced cases of subversive sympathies in G. K. C. can be found in that admirable book of verse *The Queen of Seven Swords.* The poem called "The Two Maidens" begins with a quotation from a mediaeval ballad about the famous thief Robin Hood:

Robin loved Our Dear Lady
And for doubt of deadly sin
Would never hurt a company
That any woman was in.

Had the great archer added to his alleged love for Our Lady a certain respect for Our Lord he could not have attacked parties of men either – and then his trade of banditry would have been gone. G. K. C. makes Maid Marion say:

Deep in the nettles of a ditch
He may die as a dog dies
Or on the gallows, to be the game
Of the lawyers and the lies.

Even if not an unmixed admirer of lawyers, one may be pardoned a little surprise at finding G. K. C. so much preferring bandits. The poem ends with Our Lord taking Robin to ride with his knights and making him a master of bowmen. Now in the boyish kingdom of pure fancy it is pleasant to idealize an occasional thief. Unfortunately literature is not merely a thing of pure fancy; it is also a force affecting conduct. Behind Robin Hood stand a whole series of romantically idealized thieves. There is the hero of Schiller's *Robbers* who spent much of his takings on the support of deserving young men at college. There is Victor Hugo with his old trick of sympathy for every anti-social character and detestation for most of the supporters of order. Indeed this is one of the stock conventions of the romantic movement which has done so much to form the prevailing ideas of our time. Since G. K. C. rightly detests modernism, it is queer to see him plodding along in the same monotonous romantic convention which has been modernism's chief literary influence.

For more than a century the political expression of romanticism has been radical democracy. Another poem in *The Queen of Seven Swords* deals with the fierce hostility usually shown by radical democrats and by subversives generally towards religion. G. K. C. makes St. Denys thus excuse the French Revolution to Our Lady:

Mother, if hell came after and the world laid waste for
a word,
If some of our blows fell upon thee, if some blows erred,
It fell of a fury of justice that fell from thee. . . .

The idea of the Virgin as a Sansculotte Goddess, furiously identifying Revolution with Justice, is perhaps more familiar in France and elsewhere on the Continent of Europe than in English-speaking countries. Certain radicals have tried to justify themselves by quoting from the Magnificat: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat; and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away." Certainly if you take the spiritual meaning from Our Lady's words then you are at liberty to claim her approval for the Guillotine. But in the real world humility, poverty of spirit, and spiritual pride all cut across class lines; one finds plenty of proletarians so swollen with conceit as to believe that "justice" would make them great personages, and again one finds occasional aristocrats who have achieved sainthood. Indeed, given the small number of aristocrats compared with commoners, a strikingly large proportion of the recorded saints have been what the world calls "wellborn". Our Lady herself seems to have enjoyed some sort of distinction in her neighbourhood, for at the Marriage in Cana she took it upon herself to give orders to the servants ("Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.") and they obeyed her without question.

Again, G. K. C. writing in *G. K.'s Weekly* of April 25, 1935 about so-called "Birth Control", said: "I should have much more natural sympathy with polygamy or with piracy – if it were the plundering of the rich." Passing over the point about polygamy, let us consider the matter of piracy which our Distributist leader says he would naturally prefer to contraconception – if only the sea-thieves confined themselves to robbing the rich. The present writer certainly does not mean to defend contraconception, but in comparing it with piracy of course we must assume that G. K. C. means not the pirates of the story books but real pirates — with whom history is all too familiar. Not to mention contemporary Chinese sea-thieves or the Tripolitans, Algerines, and Moors of a century ago, let us glance at the famous Buccaneers of the West Indies and the Spanish Main. There is abundant record of their doings, for instance in d'Arvieux and Raveneau de Lussan, especially in the vivid pages of Esquemeling. When they took towns it was their custom to break into houses and churches, to rape women, to disembowel little girls and boys, to flay alive, burn, and impale men. They would burn towns, sink or burn ships, hang, massacre, and drown wholesale. They would send in the severed heads of some of their prisoners in order to hasten a tardy ransom payment for the others. At the great sack of Panama some of their cruelties were almost too vile for words: for instance it amused them to hang up old men by their private parts until those parts were torn out in the victims' struggles. The pirates of the Barbary Coast were not far behind, nor are the contemporary Chinese.

Of course no one who knows G. K. C. will believe that he would in fact sympathize more with these realities of piracy than with contraconception – provided only that the pirates confined their attentions to those rich enough to pay surtaxes. One prefers to think that, for once, he spoke hastily. "Aliquando dormitat bonus Homerus." In any event, the important thing is his extreme display of hatred for the rich. Now that sort of thing may be harmless in England. The present writer would not presume to say whether it be so or not. Certainly violent civil strife is unfamiliar to the English people. But to Americans it is familiar, and in so writing G. K. C. is doing his bit toward starting in America a civil war which might be of a very nasty sort. Many such wars have been extremely nasty.

Without holding a brief for the wealthy individuals of today, one may doubt whether such a hatred for them is timely. The disorder of our time has bred an intense desire for authority, for government by men not compelled to grovel obscenely for votes. The expression of this desire is Fascism, seen at its best in Italy, dominant also in Poland and Germany, and increasing in France. Over and over again Fascist governments have repeatedly restored the spirit and self-respect of discouraged and demoralized nations. Italy before Mussolini had plenty of Socialists who were working in alliance with the so-called Liberal-Catholic group under Don Sturzo. While both groups raved against the rich, the country drifted toward chaos. Where the allied Socialist and Liberal-Catholic politicians utterly failed to restore the national self-respect, Mussolini succeeded. So under Bruening the Liberal-Catholic and his Socialist friends, Germany drifted deeper and deeper into despair. Under Hitler courage and hope returned. No matter how much we may dislike much of the Nazi programme, no one can deny the resurrection of German national spirit. So in Poland Pilsudski stamped out petty political squabbles and faction fights, replacing them with a unified patriotism. In France Socialism and semi-Socialism have become the last refuges of grafters and murderers, and a national restoration can be expected only from a victory of the quasi-Fascist forces.

Whereas the Communist dictatorship is an authoritative government which aims to stamp out tradition, the Fascist dictatorships exist to preserve tradition.

Probably there are few men more alive than Mussolini to the shortcomings of contemporary financiers and industrial magnates. But ever since he achieved power he has steadily observed the motto: Strengthen the hierarchies. Although the higher clergy or the hereditary nobility of one's country, being human, will include unworthy individuals, still we must choose between social revolution and preservation. If we choose revolution, then in practice we cannot help allying ourselves with the Marxian Socialists and Communists. If we choose to preserve, then we must reform only cautiously. Otherwise we may resemble the legendary Irish surgeon who said: "The operation was a great success but the patient died." Since 1918 many have begun to wonder how much more agitation and bloodshed our civilization could endure.

Strengthen the hierarchies, says Mussolini. Down with the rich, say Stalin and G. K. C. Now it so happens that the American business hierarchy is not altogether blind to the advantages enjoyed by a nation of owners as opposed to one of proletarians. On April 19 last – the anniversary of Lexington and Concord – a distinguished American said:

> "I hope that special pains will be taken to assure a wide distribution of the increasing national capital, thus setting up what I will call a 'Proprietary State' based on no foolish and impracticable 'share-the-wealth' movement but on the healthy encouragement of small ownership of property. It is essential to liberty that the individual be free to save with the assurance that his government will not confiscate his savings nor reduce their value arbitrarily . . . that he may live under a government of laws not subject to the tyranny or caprice of rulers or temporary majorities."

Having noted the increasingly wide distribution of property in the United States before the depression, and the persistence of small property in spite of that depression, the speaker went on as follows:

> "There is still a great group of almost propertyless Americans, and the size of this group constitutes the challenge to our American civilization. Theirs is the problem we must solve in our march toward that ideal state, contemplated by our fathers, where freedom will be combined with security through distributed ownership of property among so large a proportion of families of the country as to fix the character of society, making it neither Communist nor Fascist but Proprietary.
>
> "We must resist the creation of monopolies and encourage the growth of small independent business units. When large aggregations of capital are necessary for low-cost production, we must seek the widest possible distribution of ownership, accompanied by adequate safeguards for the small investor and stockholder."

The speaker was Ogden L. Mills, himself the inheritor of great wealth and formerly Secretary of the Treasury under President Hoover.

Again on June 26 another prominent American said:

> "The men who wrote the Constitution envisaged a nation in which an overwhelming majority of people have a share in the country. The social system under which we live will be in great danger when the majority of persons living in this country no longer have an interest in the ownership of private property."

These were the words of Colonel Knox, the publisher of the Chicago *Daily News* who may next year be the Republican candidate for President.

Turning from men like Mills and Knox to the lesser leaders of opinion, although we find noisy little "Liberal" groups in the Bohemian quarters of a few great cities, the average educated American desires to be neither socialist nor semi-socialist. Within the limits of human fallibility, he and she merely wish to be reasonably honest real people. They have little use for the financial crook, they themselves have suffered from him. But they have still less use for Red or Pink drivel about a new heaven and a new earth. If they think Distributism only another radical movement then they will say "To Hell with it"—which bit of strong language reflects their increasing impatience with criminal nonsense masquerading as "idealism". Should the subversives—masters of agitation if of nothing else—succeed in threatening general disorder, and should the elected politicians be unable or unwilling to restore order, then the American middle class will form its Vigilance Committees as it has so often done before and will deal faithfully with those agitators. Probably the treatment will be harsh but it will be effective.

The spontaneous use of force to preserve the social order is typically American. What the Fascist march on Rome did for the Italian nation, Vigilance Committees of justly angry citizens have done for many an American city. When the constituted authorities proved themselves knaves or cowards, the Vigilantes acted. That is the story of the original Klu Klux Klan, not to be confused with its anti-Catholic namesake of today but the Klan of Reconstruction days which restored white supremacy in the South.

The revolutionary disease of our time may go so far that elected politicians can no longer be tolerated. "Useless political discussion is a luxury permissible only to rich nations and in quiet times", as Mussolini truly says. Few modern peoples still find themselves rich, and none are so blind as to think the times quiet. Should the day come when silver-tongued oratory of the Kerensky-Roosevelt type is not enough to guard our civilization from Communist chaos, then the intelligence and virility of Christendom will produce more Fascist dictators. Those dictators and their lieutenants will be far from perfect, for they will be men not gods. Much in their programmes may be mistaken, and much more may be like the harsh medicines prescribed by doctors for very sick men. Nor can any dictatorship support itself by a clear theory of political right like that which once briefly legitimatized governments based on election, or that for which many centuries upheld the old hereditary dynasties. The dictators must in time develop some recognized, orderly means by which their successors can be chosen. But at least they can give us the stability necessary for the reconstruction of our disordered society.

In a later article we will consider how a Fascist dictatorship of the type now familiar to continental Europe might act to diminish proletarianism and restore property.

Grief Touched Us Early

A Contrast of Generations

Mary Everett

During the last twenty-five years an enormous shift in attitude has occurred regarding the fundamental facts of marriage, birth, and death. The young (my own among them) have been brought up to regard the first two experiences with few or no tremors and to avoid, as far as possible, all disturbing thought about the last. Our elders taught most of us, on the contrary, to think long and earnestly about our immortal souls and only briefly, as necessity demanded, upon our earthly bodies.

For my part, as I approach middle age, I am less and less satisfied that parents of this generation have actually made a good and sound bargain in so completely exchanging the older order of training for the pleasantly optimistic, and too often disappointing, procedures recommended by cheerful modern experts in child psychology. That the conceptions of original sin, pursuing fate, and predestined perdition may actually have arisen from certain dark and inexorable tendencies in human nature itself is an idea happily blinked by nearly everyone today; and children are accordingly guarded from every depressing speculation and sad experience as once they were shielded from conversation regarded as improper for young ears. It is true that parents twenty-five years ago did not consider it important to enlighten the ignorances of their children regarding those matters which were euphemistically termed "facts of life"; but neither they nor teachers of the young then shirked the more difficult task and duty of pointing out to their charges the existence of death and tragedy in life. Their religious explanations, to be sure, are as far from contemporary ways of thinking as paganism itself, but our present emphasis upon the world and the flesh will scarcely suffice to save our children from eventual encounter with the devil and all his works. Somehow, sometime, somewhere, they will have to learn that all is not moonlight and roses, or even yet efficiency and science, in this best of all possible worlds. Life Wolf Solent, they will then have to "endure or escape". Where will they find the courage demanded by the perils of this mortal life when they hardly realize such dangers even exist? I am far from convinced of the wisdom of the course followed by me and by most parents today in simply avoiding ultimate questions concerning death and disaster.

When I contrast my own upbringing in these particulars with that of my own two children I see plainly that the advantage is not altogether on their side. Despite their superior educational opportunities, they are far from prepared, even in thought, to face the rigours of this existence. Few children twenty-five years ago were left thus unaware of the spiritual agonies and pitfalls which menace all men upon this earth. In my own family, it was even regarded as entirely fit and proper for children to attend funerals, and I cannot remember that anyone ever tried to shield me, a pampered and only child, from free understanding of loss and suffering as somehow bound up in the very structure of the universe. Did not I pray in all seriousness every day to be kept from sin and wickedness, from all manner of spiritual enemies, and even from everlasting death? In their whole lives, filled with what experts call wholesome activities, I am fairly certain that my children have never meditated upon such distressing matters; much less have they anywhere encountered the idea of irreparable sorrow. Yet life, as every adult sadly acknowledges, abounds in injury past relief, in heartbreak past endurance. Does preparation for life consist, as social scientists seem to think, in merely comprehending the drift of economic and social tendencies? I wonder whether children have not a right to ask more than this of their guardians.

Those responsible for the education of my small cousins and me may indeed have esteemed temporal matters far too lightly, but they did not neglect to emphasize values more eternal. The kind of training we received in our family was in no way peculiar, but was shared by all our friends and associates. The social structure of which we were a part was founded on various concepts only lightly respected today, and the training of children was pointed, with surprising unanimity among parents, toward quite different ends than those desired by present-day educators. Our mentors did not think of education in terms of broad social policy, but stressed, rather, the painful and enduring fact that all wisdom is hard come by, achieved by few, and righteousness even more difficult of attainment. Our schooling was calculated to eliminate the less able from advanced training, and to inform the minds and strengthen the courage of all regarding death and salvation, and the ills of this life. Nearly all children were expected to learn the catechism along with their manners – and in that stark and dreary document disquieting facts about the nature and destiny of man are freely admitted. The Bible is also full of unceasing reference to the fact that man is cut down in his prime, that his years are even as the dew and the hoarfrost upon the grass – and upon the Bible and the catechism our young souls were fed, not upon the praiseworthy and successful endeavours of great scientists to overcome the ravages of disease. We therefore knew, far better than children of today, who trust, alas, too confidently to the magic of the test tube, that powers of darkness stalk abroad before which the works of Pasteur and Koch shrink to insignificance. No one nourished on Scripture, on Greek and Roman mythology, on the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*, on Plutarch, and on Shakespeare, as we were, can for one moment imagine that it profiteth a man greatly to set up his puny and feeble strength against the gods.

We had little else to read, so we pored over these books, as well as over my grandfather's anatomy, botany, and astronomy books, his sermons, his histories, and his musty moral philosophies, and even his large dictionary, full of pictures. From these authoritative sources we extracted, no doubt, as much intimate knowledge of sex as our minds could easily take in, and by methods vastly more entertaining than those humourless devices urged upon parents today! A careful reading of the Bible alone would turn up most of the important facts so painfully assembled by Havelock Ellis in his monumental volumes, as I discovered for myself years later. We read Sir Walter Scott, after whom the tales of Dickens and Thackeray seemed to us pale and unromantic indeed, an impression which only years served to efface. We discovered, too, my grandfather's war diaries (he was a surgeon in the Confederate army) which, along with Plutarch's descriptions of great battles and fiery torments, made of me an uncompromising pacifist even in my youth.

We never paused to consider problems of government in the abstract, or of social amelioration — those approaches to knowledge now recommended for the inquiring mind. Instead, we attacked with vigour the inner citadel of all evil, the will of man. We had too often seen practical government in operation from our own doorsteps to regard it as more than mere business routine. Like the Egyptians of whom Mr. Breasted writes so persuasively, we prefaced all our thinking by the meditation "Beware! Eternity approaches!" We did not at all realize that our feudal economic existence on a plantation was almost exactly paralleled by our mediaeval conception that the true meaning of life was to be looked for beyond its end.

I often think of this hearty fare so confidently dished up for our young minds to sample when I see the thin pabulum offered to my children in the schools today. No wonder death, difficulty, and danger seem to them remote, terrifying, unreal! No wonder young reformers by the thousand take for granted a world wherein, they believe, the heart of man inclines by nature toward righteousness and good will! That the need of all men for inner redemption may bear directly upon the puzzling failure of various social Utopias is a conception quite antagonistic to current sociological ideas; but it was not foreign to our thinking. Our ancestors, who had survived war and occupation, cherished little confidence in man's ability warily to steer his course by the pale and flickering light of reason and less yet in his will or inclination so to do. Death, loneliness, poverty, and sorrow were stern realities to them, and they taught us to respect evil as a stout antagonist roaring aloud for our souls.

Our formal education was not the only channel through which the idea of death naturally flowed in upon us. Far from it. Children in close and constant contact with the green earth and all its creatures can hardly fail to acquire a deep and intimate sense of their union with the course of all life. Where seasons gently merge, without sharp breaks, cycles of birth, life, and death can be watched their whole way round as parts of one continuous process in nature. That all men are subject to immutable laws of creation can scarcely seem strange to anyone who has seen crops and animals alike flourish and then be cut down like the grass; who, all his life, has seen first the corn and then the ear, and, in due time, smoke from burning cornstalks floating over autumn fields. The child who every spring has watched red sap rise in gray branches, who has lain gazing into feathery willows with his feet in warm creek water and his head upon budding leaves while beside him young rabbits sleep in their nests — that child will never need to have explained to him the theory of vital creative evolution. Nor can that philosophy ever seem alien to any youth who, night after night, stretched upon the summer grass, has followed the great stars round in their courses. Children who live under such conditions as these must ever thereafter sense, even though dimly, that both life and death are parts of another long and more embracing process hidden in the heart of time.

To us who grew up in a warm and gentle climate, the unity of all creation was thus no pale abstraction. We just as naturally grasped the different stages in the life of man and beast upon the earth. My children know few old people at all and none intimately, but we had no such truncated notion of family life. In the South young and old have always lived together, as they cannot in crowded city quarters, and aged Negroes are still felt to be common family responsibilities. There sick people are more often attended by their friends or family than by trained nurses, and, since hospitals are few in a land where large cities do not abound, children soon learn that death and sickness are no respecters of persons. Servants and masters have always shared their burdens of grief, and from the deep and common experience of unmitigated sorrow both black and white have developed a basic human sympathy flowing out to people and even to animals. In Mr. John B. Sales's touching book *The Tree Named John*, a grief-stricken little boy, taught by kind old Aunt Betsy, at last realizes that somehow in the wide universe the death of his kitten is bound up with the death of a little black baby, that grief and death are component parts of joy and life, that "God gives to every living creature tears to wash away his sorrow". In that simple faith (and who among the learned can offer a better?) we rested our souls.

The strong sense of family relationship which prevailed in our region also taught us that man's years are indeed as a shadow that passes. In the South whole families often sleep together in death over several generations, and even beloved wives are frequently laid, as by right, beside their fathers rather than beside their husband's people. Burial grounds close by the homes, even in the gardens, are not uncommon, as at the Hermitage, where the graves of Andrew Jackson, his wife, his friend, and his servant may be seen from any window. These customs were not peculiar to planters alone. Many small fenced enclosures by the wayside indicate the resting places of those dear to the small farmer who plows his meagre acres up to the very fence lines. Sometimes plainly marked graves are left unfenced and merge gently into the rolling landscape filled with growing tobacco and corn. Such a sight is as natural and familiar to Southern children as the green crops just beyond. In planted fields one finds crosses and monuments marking the spot where unknown soldiers and even famous generals now lie in peace, all forgetful of trumpets and glory. Acres reserved for Negroes are on every plantation. It is only where cities have developed that large cemeteries featuring perpetual upkeep have taken the place of these more intimate practices.

Few children growing up in the South twenty-five years ago could fail to come across graves which demanded explanation. Often these graves were marked with the child's own name, for children in that region repeatedly bear the same name in successive generations. On Sunday afternoons both adults and children in our family were apt to carry blossoms from the flower garden to the family graveyard. On these occasions the life histories of the individuals sleeping there under the creeping ivy were sure to be recited at length, so that in time each ancestor acquired a genuine personality and walked again amongst us clothed in the faults and follies as well as the virtues of his humanity.

I well remember Uncle Q. who, according to his surviving kin, unfortunately could never resist a good fight or a drink, but who, they stoutly averred, had, nevertheless, a heart of gold and unparalleled manners which I was urged to imitate. Nor can I ever forget my mounting excitement when I first learned that under our cedars and jasmines actually reposed a relative who, in his time, had been a famous duellist. Just beyond these two lay the tiny graves of twins who had come into this bitter world as their young mother left it "to search out the glory of God", as the moving inscription on her tombstone recited. I was taught also to honour the grave of a hot-headed ancestor who, after valiantly fighting Britishers and Indians, eventually succumbed to yellow fever acquired in nursing his friends. His raging temper was described in detail to me, who all too clearly had inherited some of its fire. I was likewise fully warned to avoid the impetuosity of my beautiful grandmother, whose tombstone failed to recite the plain fact that at nineteen she had married my old and decrepit grandfather in a fit of pique with her dashing lover. Southerners have long been accused of family worship, but certainly the children in our family were fully and firmly informed as to both the vices and virtues of those whose blood flowed, for good or ill, in their young veins. No strangers, enshrouded in mystical glory, lay in the high bricked graves, but our own kin, part and parcel of our own strengths and weaknesses.

In my youth, the young from all parts of the South were still taken on pilgrimages to pay proper respect to both the dead and the living of their race. Sometimes the departed kindred proved to be far more interesting than their descendants, who, often enough, furnished little ground for romantic imagination and talked wearisomely about rain and drouth and the price of rice and cotton and tobacco – all dull matters with which children were intimately familiar at home. When that kind of conversation began, I used quietly to retire to study the family gravestones.

I think yet of Aunt Sarah on whose young breast has so long lain the heavy weight of a marble slab, dated, if I remember correctly, 1784. On its flat surface I happily set out my doll tea parties all one summer when we visited relatives in Georgia. Once Aunt Sarah had hidden herself in the long grandfather clock even then ticking in the front hall, and, the door slamming shut on her, had almost perished before she was found. That escapade, so portentously related to me by my nurse as a warning to avoid undue childish exuberance, I now realize must have occurred before the Revolution. Then, however, all time seemed to me equally evanescent, fleeting, and unreal. Near her grave reposed one whose body was brought back over pioneer trails from Tennessee to rest at last beside his kin. Further on, beside the live oaks, were three or four high brick tombs with Confederate flags and laurel wreaths chiselled upon their marble tops. One of these young men was only seventeen when he fell at Shiloh, but (one among how many youths since time began?) he too "was not afraid to die for beloved friends and for his country".

Years later, in Texas, one of this same family, struck down at eighty-five, calmly made all the arrangements for his own funeral and sternly rebuked his children for their uncontrolled grief at his deathbed. "Our family has long known how to die," he reminded them, with proud serenity. It is little wonder that children reared in this tradition came gradually to feel death no strange intruder into the affairs of men, but an inevitable and natural part of life.

These family graveyards had around them no such air of cold and remote isolation as envelops city cemeteries. On the contrary, even young children soon learned to remember the birthdays of those family members who lay under the evergreens, and one whole day or more was regularly set aside each fall and spring, for the cleaning and adornment of their resting place. This day was far from being a sorrowful and heart-rending occasion for the children, who were taken along as a matter of course. It may well have been so to our elders, but they did not let us into the sharp and secret places of their grief. Instead, we were allowed to gather and plant wild violets on the graves and to weave flower chains for the headstones. The servants also accompanied us to rake the paths and set out shrubbery. Before we left, black and white, young and old, gathered together to sing "God be with you till we meet again". I never hear the music even now but that I again smell honeysuckle, cedar, and jasmine, and see again the long shadows upon the grass under which our loved ones lay.

We were thus never shielded from full knowledge of death, but were taught to prepare ourselves even in bright youth against that dread hour which cometh like a thief in the night. Our relatives – at least all our feminine relatives – were deeply and sincerely religious in a truly mystical sense which this age finds it difficult even to imagine, and their unfaltering faith bore up our childish spirits whenever death struck too close or near. I was sent regularly to read the Bible to a blind old tenant of ours, because "You know," my aunt would say earnestly, "she has only a few weeks to live". Once we were all taken to say farewell to a neighbour who gently assured us, as we stood beside his bed, that his soul was ready to meet his God. I can remember yet his steady blue eyes and the illumination which seemed to me to shine from his shrunken face. The plain and simple faith and courage of our elders in meeting death left small room for terror in our childish souls.

To be sure, all our friends and family were not able thus magnificently to rise above the garment of this flesh. One of our uncles, who loved fine racehorses and who yearned much after the pleasures of this world, would have perfectly understood Miss Millay's sonnets – although I never saw him read anything except the *Constitution*, the *Picayune*, and the *Courier*. He too would have to be dragged shrieking and protesting through the gates of death. A fine nurse, he fought like a madman for the life of every friend who fell ill. In days when black jaundice ravaged the country every fall, he would be called out time and again to wrestle with destiny for the living breath of someone he loved. He rolled life, like a sweet pellet, under his tongue; he passed through the Confederate War, through all manner of danger his life long, and survived, unchristened and unbaptized, bowing his head before neither God nor man, until a ripe and unregenerate old age. I loved him very deeply and sincerely, but, like all the rest of the family, I prayed regularly for his soul and felt his belligerent attitude toward Providence a sort of blot on the family honour.

We also had a feminine relative whose free thinking, though well known to us all, scarcely impressed us as having a beneficent effect upon her character. The children in the family quite definitely felt that a kinswoman who refused to go to church on Sundays and who shuddered at the notion of attending funerals was scarcely worthy to be counted a member of our clan. Somewhere (in whispers) we had heard rumours that a flighty young great aunt, years before in Mississippi, had eloped with a worthless poor white, and that the family ever since had been called upon at intervals to take care of the equally worthless resulting offspring. We never doubted that this feminine convert to scepticism belonged to that derelict branch of the family. Some of the uncles, we knew, openly proclaimed it to be past their understanding why plowing must cease on Sunday. Generally speaking, however, the example of our feminine relatives was all-pervasive, and our young hearts rested in sure confidence that the strong arm of the Lord would suffice to carry us past even the jaws of death, and that the shield and buckler of righteousness would protect us.

Although we were thus familiar from our youth up with the experience of death and sorrow, we were in no sense serious or sober-minded youngsters, burdened with the tragedies of existence. The sun rises and the sun sets, we thought; man is sometimes happy, and then, born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, he is no longer so; the cotton is planted, green shoots appear; man is born, and dies, and lives again. It was as simple as that to us. Grief touched us early, it is true, but until we grew far older and wiser and wearier we neither quivered nor quaked before its presence.

In contrast, young people today seem to me uncannily wise, at least in their own esteem, as regards the practical ordering of their lives, but pitifully ignorant and unprepared to face a world actually full of transcendent mysteries and unsuspected tragedies. Their blithe and overweening confidence in man's capacity to direct his own destiny can scarcely be justified, as any adult knows, by the bitter facts in the case. Parents, themselves overimpressed by the idea of progress and puzzled by modern literature and thought, have consented to the present artificial separation of life from any supporting and co-ordinating philosophy or religion. As a young mother, I too patiently attempted to follow the brisk and optimistic theories advocated by those who believe in the untrammelled development of the young (at least so far as I was able to understand and reconcile variant doctrine). I confess, however, at middle life to a waning enthusiasm for this kind of advice. It seems to me now at least as important for a child to bump his head against the incredible stars and even in his youth to grapple with mystery and terror as it is for him to understand the merits of social co-operation. To consider the end, as well as the beginning, of life calls for a kind of high courage of which, to say the least, man has always had unceasing need.

The Integration of Agrarian and Exchange Economies

T. J. Cauley

It is a common charge against the Agrarians that they proceed on the assumption that a satisfying life for the people can be based upon the economic foundation of a self-sufficing agriculture; whereas, according to the critics, it is obvious that there are many normal and legitimate wants on the part of human beings which cannot be satisfied at all with the products of agriculture. This criticism is by no means entirely valid, for virtually all of the Agrarians have pointed out that under the system which they advocate agriculture will be the *chief* occupation of the people but not the *sole* occupation. It is probably true, however, that the Agrarians in their natural eagerness to stress the strictly agricultural aspects of the system have somewhat neglected the exposition of the relationships which the other occupations are to bear to that of relatively self-sufficing agriculture.

Dr. Owsley in his article in the March, 1935, issue of The American Review has, I think, gone a long way toward meeting even this latter criticism; but it is probable that a further elaboration of the matter will be worthwhile.

I do not propose at all to recede from my original position that Southern agriculture should in the future concentrate its efforts upon the objective of self-sufficiency. The land must nurture the people, and the beasts that till it. The farm people must regard the production of crops for sale on the market as a necessary evil and not as an avenue to an economic Paradise. Always there should be meal in the meal-barrel, meat in the smoke-house, sorghum in the jug, fruits and vegetables in the cellar, and cows and chickens out around the barn. There might well be, insane as it no doubt will sound to all "progressive" people, a spinning wheel and a hand loom in the chimney-corner.

Dr. O. E. Baker, of the United States Department of Agriculture, has the following to say in this connection:

> Likewise, will the small income available in agriculture, associated with the high cost of things the farmer buys, urge him to make more of these things himself? Will the farmer grind his own wheat or have it ground on shares at the local mill? Will farm women weave the cloth for much of the family clothing, perhaps buying the yarn, and make many of their own dresses? These are not idle questions. One of my friends in the Department of Agriculture, who owns a farm in the country nearby, has enough of his wheat ground at a local mill to supply the needs of his family, and for 5 bushels of wheat he gets a barrel of flour, whereas it would require nearly 10 bushels of wheat to buy a barrel of flour at the retail store. And my friend claims that with $3 worth of yarn and 5 hours of labour at a hand loom in his home he produced enough cloth for a suit of clothes, and that several tailors in New York City appraised the retail value of this cloth he made at $25 to $30. Of course, a woolen mill could make the cloth cheaper than my friend did, but the costs of distribution have become

so large that he could produce the cloth on his crude loom, apparently much cheaper than he could buy it at retail.*

But in spite of all these possibilities, there remain certain things for the purchase of which some money will be needed. There is the matter of medical care, the importance of which probably ranks with that of food. Country people have perhaps suffered more from a lack of proper medical attention than from any other one thing in times past. Further there is the matter of education of the children, particularly their higher education. Certain exotic foodstuffs, such as sugar, spices, and tropical fruits, must be obtained from outside sources, although it is likely that most of these could be got in sufficient quantities and without any great inconvenience through barter. And always there are taxes. So altogether, even a relatively self-sufficing farm family will need some money, which is to say that they will need to produce some cash crops along with the others.

In the South the two outstanding cash crops are cotton and tobacco. There are others of local and minor importance, but cotton and tobacco are far and away the most important and may be taken for illustrative purposes. The natural advantages of soil, climate, and other factors which the South possesses in the production of these crops are too well known to make it worthwhile to repeat them here. We have further advantages in the form of well-developed techniques and established equipment and organization. Both of these commodities can be produced in the South in even greater quantities than in the past.

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* O. E. Baker: *The Outlook for Rural Youth*, Extension Service Circular 203, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The present appalling conditions among the cotton and tobacco farmers of the Southern states are of course essentially due to the lack of an adequate market. In normal years, something like 55 or 60 per cent of our cotton crop is exported for sale in foreign markets. The percentage is not quite as high in the case of tobacco, but at that it is high enough to dominate the marketing terms and prices of the whole crop. Most of this cotton and tobacco goes to the countries of western Europe, with smaller quantities going to Japan and the other countries of the Orient.

The most important difficulty with the market for our cotton in recent years and at present may be summed up by saying that by and large the industrial nations of western Europe have lost their ability to buy cotton from us in anything like normal quantities. The two fundamental reasons for this disappearance of European purchasing power are: (1) our prohibitively high tariff barriers against their manufactured goods, and (2) the international debt situation.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, the nations of western Europe, England particularly, bought cotton and other farm products and raw materials from us, and paid for them with their manufactured goods and such commercial and financial services as carrying our ocean freight, writing insurance policies for us, and handling our international banking and exchange./

During this same period, England, and to a lesser extent the other European countries, were investing large quantities of their surplus capital in our railroads, our great public utility systems, our commercial and industrial enterprises generally. This meant that each year there appeared in this country a large balance of payments due the European peoples as interest on bonds and dividends on stocks of American corporations. These balances were available for the purchase of American cotton and other raw materials and foodstuffs.

It is true that throughout this period there were some obstacles to this trade in the form of American tariffs, but they were not high enough to diminish the flow very seriously. In more recent years, and particularly since the close of the World War, these tariffs have been raised to crazy heights with truly calamitous effects.

In addition to this change in the tariff situation, the United States has shifted from the status of a debtor nation which she occupied prior to the World War to that of the greatest creditor nation of all time.

During the past two or three years there has been an increase in cotton-growing in Brazil of boom proportions. This has not been the result of any sudden improvement in the Brazilian soil or climate, of course. Nor has it been the result of the crop reduction programme in this country. In spite of the reduction in cotton acreage we still have an enormous amount of cotton in storage which we have not been able to sell. The increase of cotton production in Brazil has resulted essentially from the fact that England and the other European countries find it much easier to pay for cotton which they get from Brazil than to pay for that which they get from the United States. This follows simply from the fact that Brazil is a great deficit area so far as manufactured goods are concerned and that she has no prohibitive tariffs against the importation of such goods from Europe. In addition to these factors, the European nations are not in debt to Brazil as they are to the United States.

The remedy for the situation is obvious. The South needs a removal of the tariff barriers and an adjustment of the international debts. The means whereby these two things are to be accomplished are, however, unfortunately not so easily determined.

The really sensible things to do, of course, are to have the nation as a whole go on a free-trade basis and to cancel the war debts outright. There appears, however, to be virtually no chance of our persuading the other sections of the country, notably the North and East, to do these things. They are so completely and unreservedly committed to a policy of high protective tariffs that even the recent economic calamities which have descended upon the nation have not been sufficient to change their faith.

It is to be urged rather that regional governments of the nature indicated by Dr. Owsley in the paper which I mentioned above be established as bases for the administration of the tariff. It will be recalled that Dr. Owsley advocated the creation of a number of regional subgovernments in the United States, the regions corresponding generally to the various economic, or human-use, areas of the country. His idea, as I understand it, is that the tariff policy of the United States as a whole should be determined by treaty between these regional governments. I should agree with this in so far as granting the desirability if harmonious action between the regions constitutes agreement, but I should be inclined toward insisting upon the virtual autonomy of the regions with respect to the tariff in case no generally acceptable treaty could be arrived at. The point is that the populous North and East must no longer be allowed to dictate a tariff policy for its own benefit and ruinous to the South.

Certainly with an arrangement of this sort we of the South would have an enormous moral advantage, for we could say to the people of the North: "If you believe in the eternal virtue of a protective tariff system you are at liberty to continue with it so far as your region is concerned. It is our judgement that it is ruining us, and we don't want it any longer." If they should object to a proposal of this sort, there could be only one real reason for their doing so; and that would be their desire to exploit the Southern market for their manufactured goods. That, of course, is essentially their motive now in insisting upon the maintenance of the tariff system; but so long as the tariffs apply to the country as a whole, they can hide behind their contention that they are beneficial to the country as a whole. With the regional basis for tariff-making established, they could no longer make any such contention.

There is no question but that a free-trade policy on the part of the South would be somewhat detrimental to certain of the industrial enterprises which have been established in this section in recent years. For example, it would hurt the cotton mills; at least according to the pleas of their owners such would be the case. A number of things need to be said in connection with this argument. In the first place, it is to be noted that in spite of the alleged "rapid industrialization" of the South in recent years the great bulk of the people still live on the farms and most of the others are directly dependent upon the farmers for a livelihood. Only a very small fraction of the people of the South are engaged in the manufacture of cotton cloth, and there is no reason to suppose that their welfare is any more important than that of the farmers. And it is virtually certain that more of the benefits of the protective tariffs have gone to the owners of cotton mills in the form of larger profits than have gone to the workers in the form of higher wages. From many points of view, it would be far from a calamity if the growth of cotton mills in the South were to be checked. If the cotton mills have contributed one particle to the cultural or spiritual improvement of Southern life, I have not been able to observe it; and their contribution even to the economic advancement of the region is open to very serious question.

There is no good reason to suppose, however, that as many cotton mills as we need could not survive the removal of tariff protection. With such outstanding advantages as nearness to the raw materials, abundant power resources, and good capital equipment, the Southern mills should certainly be able to hold their own in competition with European mills. If they cannot, we have no real use for them anyway.

If there be a genuine desire, and there undoubtedly is, on the part of some people to raise the general level of wages and improve the working and living conditions of cotton-mill employees, there is a much better way to do it than that afforded by a protective tariff. Most of the cotton-mill workers have been recruited from the ranks of tenant-farmers and their families. These people have fled from the economic and social degradation of tenant-farming, and there is still an enormous supply of them on the farms ready to take the places of any mill-workers who may be so injudicious as to strike. Fundamentally, the best way to improve the status of any group of workers is to create a relative shortage of that type of worker; and the way to do this with respect to Southern mill-workers is so to improve the tenant-farmers, primarily by making them farm owners, as to make them unwilling to work in the cotton mills under conditions similar to those which prevail at present. Cut off the potential flow of workers from the farms to the cotton mills and you will have gone a long way toward solving the problem of Southern cotton-mill labour.

With the restoration of the world market for Southern cotton which could be brought about by the methods indicated, there is no reason why we should not be able to sell something like fifteen million bales of cotton a year at a price of at least a hundred dollars per bale. This would not be an enormous amount of money on a per capita basis for the people of the Cotton Belt, but it should certainly be enough for the satisfaction of all their needs which cannot be supplied by a self-sufficing agriculture.

In fact, the great danger is not that this would not be enough money, but rather the opposite, that it might be *too much money:* the ability of Southern farmers to sell fifteen million bales of cotton a year at a hundred dollars per bale might well convert them entirely to a devotion to a "money-making" economy.

This, of course, would from the Agrarian point of view constitute a calamity.

The essence of the problem is this: Can we enable the Southern farmers to make enough money for the purchase of those things which they cannot produce on their farms, without converting them soul and body to a pursuit of money-making as such? This is a very real problem. In fact, the present general addiction to single-crop farming in the South is in large part the result of the fact that every so often cotton-farming has yielded very substantial money returns. These occasional successes have tempted great numbers of farmers to pursue this pattern of farming in the hope of achieving other such successes.

We must devise some method of insuring the farmer's continued devotion to a diversified agriculture even if he does succeed to some degree in making money by growing and selling cotton. I think that this can be done.

To begin with, it is probable that the general redistribution of land ownership which the Agrarian programme contemplates must be accomplished in large part with the assistance of government credit. It should be a condition of all of the loans made for the purchase of land by landless farmers that the borrower pursue a programme of diversified farming, as against specialized one-crop farming, in a way approved by the County Agricultural Agent or some other qualified authority. Inasmuch as such loans for the purchase of land would in the great majority of cases extend over a period of thirty or forty years, this requirement would be enforced throughout a long period. It is to be believed that after practising such a programme for so long the farmers would be so persuaded of its merits as to continue it voluntarily thereafter.

This arrangement would not, of course, cover all cases. Some farmers already own their land, and others will probably succeed in buying land without the assistance of government credit. These farmers too, however, should be put under pressure to persist in diversified farming, even after the possibility of selling cotton and tobacco and other cash crops at good prices has been restored. Dr. Owsley has indicated one possible method of doing this, and I think that it is a good one. He proposes that all land ownership be put upon a contingent basis. That is, no owner of land will be allowed to continue in possession of it unless he takes all reasonable precautions to prevent the exhaustion of its fertility through erosion or otherwise. This means that any farmer, regardless of how he obtained title to his land, who so abuses it by single-cropping as to threaten its fertility and continued usefulness would be assessed a suspended fine. If he did not take all reasonable measures to remedy the abuse within a specified time, the fine would be imposed; and if there were repeated offenses, the land would, after due hearing in a court of chancery, escheat to the state. This proposal is based upon the quite reasonable principle that the land must be preserved in its essential usefulness for all posterity rather than be exploited for a temporary advantage. Under such an arrangement, a system of well-balanced, diversified farming could be enforced upon farmers generally and indefinitely.

In these ways I think that we could keep the farmers permanently divorced from addiction to money-making. I should like to go further, however, and do somewhat the same thing for the people of the towns in the South, both for the sake of removing the farmers from the temptation of imitating money-making city folk and for the good of the townspeople themselves.

For there would be some towns and some people in the towns even under a system of general Agrarianism. I hope, however, that the towns and the spirit of the people who would live in them would be far different. The towns in an Agrarian nation should be small rather than large; and what is of much greater importance, the units of property owned by the people of the towns should be small rather than large. Under the present system of Industrial Capitalism, the typical city includes a comparatively few people who own the great bulk of the property, particularly the income-producing property; while the great mass of the people own essentially no property and make a living, if at all, by working for the owners of property. The position of this latter class is generally characterized by insecurity and frequently by insufficiency. All of which is commonplace knowledge.

Our urban industrial and commercial proletariat is from no point of view in a desirable situation. If they succeed by means of organized labour activity or government intervention in securing somewhat more regular employment and higher wages, these gains are lost almost immediately in an upsurge of their standards of expenditure, urged on by all the multitudinous pressure of advertising and "modern merchandising" techniques, to the end that they are as discontented and lacking in fullness of life as they were before.

The Agrarian pattern of town life calls for a general distribution of income-producing property among the people. As Hilaire Belloc has pointed out the freehold miller can be a free man as well as the freehold farmer. There can be no doubt, of course, that the division of urban industrial and commercial property into such comparatively small units would result in some decline in what is called "efficiency". No doubt many of the "economies of mass production" would be lost. But the importance of such "efficiency" and "economies" has been enormously overrated by the orthodox economists. Efficient production by large-scale methods benefits us nothing if there be no customers for the products when they are ready. And from the standpoint of the masses, the efficiency with which goods are produced means absolutely nothing if they lack the wherewithal to purchase them.

Which is simply to say that the object of an economic system is not production *per se*. The object of an economic system is to make the best use of available resources; and the "best use" may well involve many considerations other than the number of physical units of output and the "cost per unit". A system of widespread ownership of property will result in a moderately large production in physical units and in a condition of general security and freedom for the people, these latter considerations, in so far as the Agrarians are concerned, being of much greater importance than large production alone.

The end of economic activity from any rational point of view is not mere productivity. The end is happiness for the people, and security and freedom will in the long run contribute a great deal more to happiness than all the titanic outpourings of our gigantic factories can ever do.

But the question naturally arises as to how a redistribution of urban property is to be brought about, and, once it has been accomplished, how it is to be maintained against the forces tending toward concentration. There are a number of possible answers to this question, some of which have been given by Hilaire Belloc in his *The Restoration of Property;* but the one which I propose to give here is largely in terms of a new policy with respect to corporations.

In effect, what we do when we confer a charter upon a business corporation is to give a group of valuable privileges and advantages to an association of persons who are, on the whole, least in need of any such advantages in the economic struggle. This is simply to say that by creating and permitting the continued existence of corporations we have done the most effective thing ever done in the direction of encouraging and making possible the great concentrations of urban wealth which are now to be found in this country and most of the other countries of the Western world.

By its very nature, the corporation tends toward a greater and greater degree of concentration of property-rights on the part of fewer and fewer people, without any corresponding degree of responsibility. The number of stockholders in corporations is small to begin with as compared with the whole number of people. But the typical small stockholder in a corporation cannot be said to be a property owner in any true sense of the term. Corporations are controlled by Boards of Directors, and Boards of Directors are in turn elected by the comparatively few large stockholders who constitute the "insiders" of the concerns. The average small stock-holder never attends a stockholders' meeting, never votes, never has any significant powers whatever in the control of the affairs of the corporation. A large corporation is, in effect, a device whereby the property which is technically owned by a large number of stockholders is controlled for all practical purposes by the Board of Directors, which is not necessarily representative of the stockholders as a whole at all. There are inevitably fewer large stock-holders than small ones. And just as inevitably, large corporations, under the present system, tend to drive out the small ones in the process of competition. So the characteristics of the large corporation are essentially the characteristics of the system as a whole.

The thing to do ultimately, of course, is to abolish the corporation as a type of business organization. There is fundamentally no reason why a group of persons by combining their financial resources should acquire special privileges and advantages as against those possessed by individuals. If combination of resources be desirable for any particular business enterprise, let it be done as a partnership, in which no special privileges or advantages are involved, and responsibility is made clear. Democracy, both political and economic, is impossible once the principle of the corporation is established and developed.

If some enterprise, such as a railroad, be too large for a partnership, let it be conducted by the government directly, as has virtually come to be the case anyway.

Without corporations, our business concerns would be of comparatively small size, and the ownership of them would be correspondingly widely distributed. This is not to say that some individual proprietors would not acquire larger business properties than others. But such inequalities would not be anything like so great as those which exist now, and they would not persist through the generations as do corporate aggregates of property under the present system. Industry and trade would be conducted on a relatively small scale, and there is good reason to believe that the forced abandonment of mass-production methods would bring about a considerable improvement in the quality and aesthetic attributes of many types of goods. There is further good reason for arguing that an improvement in the quality of the things which we use would add more to the satisfactions of American life than would an increased quantity. A few things of fine quality and great durability are to be preferred to many things of poorer quality and less durability. With the abolition of corporations there might conceivably be a partial return even to handicrafts manufacture in our towns and cities, with the high standards of workmanship which are associated with the handicrafts.

With the abolition of corporations and their large-scale methods, it seems probable that much of the socially most undesirable advertising and high-pressure-salesmanship techniques would vanish. Small business concerns carry on advertising to some extent, but a small concern cannot finance the great national advertising campaigns that do so much to make our people dissatisfied with what they have and desirous of things the lack of which they have never felt before. The advertising of small business enterprises, essentially local in their scope, is primarily of the bulletin type, simple announcements to the general effect that such-and-such is for sale at such-and-such a place. Advertising of this sort has none of the social disadvantages of the high-powered "copy" turned out by the high-salaried masters of applied psychology.

Desirable as this complete abolition of corporations may be from these various points of view, it would naturally constitute too great a shock to the body politic and economic were it to be done immediately, and would probably bring about a revulsion of feeling even on the part of those people who would in the long run benefit most from it. The thing must be done gradually. The social instrumentality best adapted to the instituting of such changes is taxation. A special system for taxing corporations should be instituted in the Southern regional area as soon as possible. It should be in the nature of a graduated tax on share-holdings in all corporations.

The tax on such holdings should be graduated on three different bases. In the first place, large shareholdings should be taxed at a progressively higher rate as against small stock-holdings. This progression should be very steep, and the tax should be in addition to any and all income taxes to which the holder of stock may be subject.

In the second place, there should be a big differential between rates of taxation on shares of stock owned by *bona fide* employees of a corporation and those on stocks owned by non-employees. The rates paid by the employees should be lower, of course. A corporation owned and controlled by the workers thereof is a decidedly more desirable arrangement than the usual variety.

In the third place, there should be a differential between the rates paid by stockholders who live in the community in which the physical plant of the corporation is located and those paid by absentee stockholders. There is good reason to believe that stockholders close at hand will be considerably more interested in the welfare of the employees of the corporation and of the community at large than those who live off in another part of the country. The rates should favour those who are living nearby.

Under a system of taxation of this sort, a particular stockholder might find himself subject to high tax rates on his holdings in as many as three different ways: (1) as a large stock-holder rather than a small one, (2) as a non-employee of the corporation rather than an employee, and (3) as a non-resident of the county or state in which the plant of the corporation is located rather than a resident. By such an arrangement the ownership of stock in corporations could be made at least much less attractive than it now is.

Thus in the course of years there might well come about such a shift away from the corporate form that its complete abolition could be accomplished without any major calamity to the economic system as a whole. A transitional step should be employed, however, wherein the ownership of stock in a corporation would be restricted to the *bona fide* employees. It might be that this device could be used to advantage for a considerable period of years.

In order to make such a system of taxation practicable it would be necessary to place the burden of assessing the tax upon the corporations themselves. Upon pain of forfeiting its charter, each corporation would be required to submit to the tax authorities a list of the holders of all its stocks as of a certain date. Any falsifications in such a list for the purpose of defeating the object of the tax would constitute legal grounds for the revoking of the charter of the corporation. The abolition of corporations would also serve minor purposes. Obviously it would involve the abolition of corporate securities and the trading in such securities. A considerable portion of the "New Deal" legislation has had as its purpose the regulation of the buying and selling of securities, in order to protect the public against worthless and fraudulent stocks and to prevent the periodic stock-market "booms" which constitute one of the major causes of the depression phase of the business cycle. Although this legislation is probably well conceived within its limits, it is essentially directed against symptoms rather than fundamental causes. It will prosper accordingly.

And now by way of a brief summary: With a general redistribution of farm property firmly anchored to a system of diversified farming, a restoration of the foreign market for our cotton and tobacco, and the abolition of the great aggregations of property in our cities, by the methods indicated above, I think that there is sound reason for a belief in the workability in the South of an Agrarian economy with its complement of villages and towns. At least, if there be not such sound reason, it is not because the Agrarians have overlooked entirely the problem of the integration of town and country.

REVIEWS

French Royalism*

LET the reader imagine himself at a movie theatre, watching a film in which a magnificent but ancient ship, after a long and glorious career, is finally sunk. Then in the continuation of the same film let him imagine a scene showing the same ship rising again to the surface, transformed into a formidable modern submarine – unmistakably the same ship and with the old flag flying, but with the old muzzle-loading guns transformed into tapering, rifled breech-loaders and ominous torpedo tubes. If this seem to outdo Jules Verne, let us remember that Verne was at any rate a Frenchman, and that another Frenchman, Talleyrand, once said in a famous phrase "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose". At any rate, no less violent metaphor can do justice to the resurrection of French Royalism under Maurras together with his colleagues and subordinates of the *Action Française*.

Among these colleagues one of the first is Maurice Pujo. The present writer has met him but once and retains little more than the memory of a pair of quiet, keen, and somewhat suspicious eyes looking out from a face framed by a pointed grey beard. . . . Had you and I, dear reader, spent nearly thirty years in constant and bitter opposition to the government of our country, doubtless we too would look a little suspiciously upon the world.

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* LES CAMELOTS DU ROI *by Maurice Pujo* (FLAMMARION, Paris).

The importance of Maurice Pujo is that since 1908 he has been the leading spirit of the Camelots du Roi, the organization of Royalist young men whose direct action has joyously enlivened so many otherwise dull and disheartening pages of French history throughout the last twenty-six years. The words "direct action" have a sinister sound, but notwithstanding the intensity and vigour of their innumerable riots and fights with the police it is the proud boast of the Camelots that they have never taken a life. Until the bloody day of February 6th, 1934, it was also their good fortune to have lost only one life in their civil wars. Indeed it was in their tradition that the crowd of February 6th were without deadly weapons when they marched against the vile parliamentary politicians and met the fire of honest policemen and soldiers still too obedient to the aforesaid parliamentary scum.

The very name Camelots du Roi throws a vivid light on the new Royalism, for Camelot is an unpretentious word meaning huckster or peddler, a word whose very plainness emphasizes the complete absence of affectation or snobbery in the new Royalism. Although the French Counter-Revolution welcomes both labourers and nobles, it is chiefly staffed and manned by that strong middle class which has made every French Revolution since 1789 and now – at long last – begins to desire traditional authority and order.

Most of the book is concerned with the origin and first campaigns of the Camelots. From its pages one may learn of the joyous war waged against Thalamas, a typically Republican professor in the state-supported Sorbonne of thirty years ago who loved to insult the memory of the national heroine Joan of Arc. Notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the republican government with its police power and its submissive university authorities, Pujo and his Camelots effectively deflated and finally routed the anti-patriot amid the laughter of Paris.

The eighth chapter includes an interesting note on human nature especially among the young: the old-fashioned Royalist propaganda had relied chiefly on what an American would call "hand-outs", which tactic had produced little result. When the *Action Française* and the Camelots began to engage in actual combat and to run real risks – of blows, jail sentences with their resulting family quarrels, loss of jobs, etc. – Royalist enthusiasm rose to boiling point and a tide of new recruits began to flow in. Youth will never be deaf to the drum taps of devotion and sacrifice; it is for age to see that the crusading fervour is directed to worthy ends.

The second part of the book describes Pujo's life during a jail sentence of some months. From his contact with a group of radical fellow-prisoners one may learn again the often repeated lesson that most radical agitators, underneath their gorgeous language, are very dirty dogs. The third part is of less interest to the American reader; it playfully describes the arguments between the Royalist of the new type and one of the old and timid sort.

However, this volume is only a preliminary study of the movement. In a later volume Pujo will tell of the course of the Camelots du Roi through the days of the War, when they provided the spearhead of French patriotism both at the front and in the home sector; in the years just after the War when Leon Daudet's vivid parliamentary career brought a new wave of recruits to the party; and finally in the recent years of crisis and impending explosion when the forces of the Left have drawn together but are steadily losing ground to forces of the Right who even when not avowed Royalists are strongly influenced in both ideas and tactics by the Camelots du Roi. It is not often that a man who has played so signal a part in a history-making movement also writes that movement's history. Pujo's book and its sequel will provide an important contemporary document of high interest.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON

Blind Alleys in Science*

THIS latest Eddington volume contains the Messenger Lectures delivered by the Cambridge scientist at Cornell last year. In the opening lecture Eddington seeks to explain the philosophical outlook of modern science. To do so he makes a contrast between the scientific picture of the universe described in physics and what he calls "the familiar story" in our minds. For his second chapter he inserts a summary of scientific teachings in regard to atomic physics, and then he moves into four chapters dealing with the consequences of the statistical type of law, first introduced into physics in the domain of thermodynamics, which, he says, has in recent years driven out the older causal type of law from the foundations of physics. These six chapters constitute the first half of the book.

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* NEW PATHWAYS IN SCIENCE *by Sir Arthur Eddington* (MACMILLAN. 333 pp. $3.00).

Then there is a change of subject, the next four chapters being devoted to astrophysics, a subject which Eddington has made peculiarly his own. One chapter deals with what the author calls "the constants of nature" which he defines as names given to the measured quantities which are continually being referred to or made use of by scientists, such as the charge of an electron, the velocity of light, the constant of gravitation, and the cosmical constant. Then we come to the chapter on the theory of groups which, our author tells us, really "touches the keynote of scientific philosophy". The final chapter is a brief survey of objections that have been launched from time to time by those who oppose the Eddington view of the universe.

In the very first page of the book Eddington throws down the gage to the philosophers, categorically repudiating the "familiar story" of what is happening around us and asserting that "physical science now deliberately aims at presenting a new version of the story of our experience from the very beginning". With a distinction between two kinds of knowledge, namely the inferred knowledge which we have about the physical objects which presumably lie at the far end of our avenues of perception, and the direct knowledge constituted by the mind's immediate awareness of its own sensations, thoughts, and emotions, he comes to the enunciation of the primary principle of his epistemological argument: "Mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience; all else is remote inference." Inevitably the philosophical reader will think of the Cartesian *chose qui pense.*

Not only are the initial data of physics a collection of nerve signals, but these nerve signals are pictured by us, he says, as known processes in the external world. "This identification of our initial data is not itself an initial datum; it is one of our indirect inferences." Thus, what the ordinary man is wont to call the hard-and-fast reality of the external world is merely, in the Eddington view, an "indirect inference" from the data of sensory experience. What the world outside us really is we do not know directly, and presumably can never know directly, for "it is the inexorable law of our acquaintance with the external world that that which is presented for knowing becomes transformed in the process of knowing". This phrase has a familiar ring for the scholastic, who remembers the old principle *quidquid recipitur in intellectu, recipitur per modum intelligentis.*

But in his exclusive preoccupation with particular inferences from the data of our sensory experience, Eddington misses the point that the senses are nothing more than cognoscitive feelers, so to speak, and that the mind possesses another and higher power of making contact with the real. Aquinas, following Aristotle, spoke of that power as the abstractive power of the intellect, whose function of abstraction is as normal as is the bodily process of digestion. The moment the intellect receives the datum of sense-perception, it assimilates it to itself, divests it of every particularized condition and abstracts the whatness, the quiddity, thereupon rising to a knowledge that differs from sense-perception not in degree but in kind. Thus, if a man looks at a passing automobile, his sense data are certain external elements in a particular dress, which is temporal and spatial, but the intellect draws out of this sensible content the ideas of motion, of force, of being.

That Eddington is vaguely conscious of the existence and functioning of this abstractive power of the intellect is evident from his theory of a "web of existence" to which all that enters into knowledge is related in various ways. He himself exists and other conscious beings exist, and even "the external world described in physics (errors and omissions excepted) really exists". But he offers no effective proof of the truth of this "remote inference". His so-called neo-realism is not sufficient to bridge the gap between mind and the world-as-it-exists-outside-us.

In the important chapter on the theory of groups, on which the author seems to rely for the very foundations of his philosophy of science, the layman is quite at sea. Eddington's aim appears to be to show how the mathematician first gets a grip on electrons, protons, waves, and such like, which are "the basal entities whose nature and activities are essentially unknowable". In the course of the chapter he rarely seems to awake to the fact that he is dealing with what the scholastic would call "abstractions", in this case the intellectual precipitates which are the normal results of the process of mathematical cognition.

Of far more interest to the ordinary reader is the chapter on *The End of the World.* Faithful to the second law of thermodynamics, the author tells us that ahead there is ever-increasing disorganization in the universe and that ultimately – it may be billions of years hence — the whole world must be swallowed up by the advancing tide of chance and chaos. In accepting this scientific theory of the heat-death of the universe he finds no difficulty. His problem is not in the future but in the past. Our present fundamental conceptions of physical law lead, he says, to what he finds to be philosophically a repugnant conclusion, namely that there must have been an abrupt beginning of the present order of nature, "and even those who would welcome a proof of the intervention of a Creator will probably consider that a single winding-up at some remote epoch is not really the kind of relation between God and his world that brings satisfaction to the mind".

In face of this problem Eddington makes a strange admission. He says that the difficulty arises, not so much from a fault in the present system of physical law, as in the whole relation of the method of analysis of experience employed in physical science to the actualities with which it deals:

> We have swept away the anti-chance from the field of our current physical problems, but we have not got rid of it. When some of us are so misguided as to try to get back milliards of years into the past we find the sweepings piled up like a high wall, forming a boundary — a beginning of time — which we cannot climb over.

So there it is; he sees no escape from the difficulty, and "one cannot say definitely that future developments of science will provide an escape".

From the viewpoint of logic the most vicious process in the book is that whereby the author passes to the question of how far the physicist's principle of indeterminacy may be extended so as to cover the activities of the human will. Conjecturing that the smallest unit of structure in which the physical effects of volition have their origin contains many billions of atoms, he believes that "if such a unit behaved like an inorganic system of similar mass the indeterminacy would be insufficient to allow appreciable freedom". His tentative view is that the conscious unit has a much higher indeterminacy of behaviour, "simply because of the unitary nature of that which in reality it represents, namely the Ego". Although a review is hardly the place to establish the criticism, it must be stated that this theory of human indeterminacy is based on a view of the human will which no sound philosophy ever entertained. In any clear analysis of the question, human beings have a measure of freedom of choice which is in no way dependent on their physical organism or on any cosmological facts or theories whatever. Eddington is here wrestling with imaginary bugaboos and providing for himself a totally unnecessary and irrelevant escape. Free will, rightly considered, was never affected by the mechanistic, deterministic method of physics and derives no support from this talk of indeterminacy.

The conclusion that is forced upon one by the book is that the scientific picturization of the universe is the result of a selective process applied to the elements of man's total experience. From our total reactions to our surroundings science selects a small part as being relevant to its purpose, which is nothing else than an attempt to bestow a certain kind of order and a certain kind of coherence upon man's experience.

Aristotle and Aquinas are symbols of another kind of order and another kind of coherence. Their criterion was teleological, and they studied phenomena as being ordered in accordance with their bearing on human purposes and human values. The *philosophia perennis* has never interpreted the temporal passage of nature as a mere succession of events but as the passage from potentiality to actuality, and the merely spatial and temporal connections of natural phenomena were of little value compared with their logical implications. Natural phenomena were regarded as illustrating certain general philosophical principles and as serving a purpose that was universal. In the mind of Aristotle, nature was rational, and since both nature and man were dependent upon the same Prime Mover, it was reasonable to assume that the workings of nature should proceed in a manner intelligible to the human mind.

According to the modern scientist, nature is mathematical, an attitude with which Eddington almost finds fault in the closing pages of this book. For he finds that there is a side of our nature which is aloof from the scrutiny of the physicist and the mathematician. It is his hope that our aesthetic and religious experiences, our whole world of what are called human values, may not always remain excluded from the scientific scheme. "Before we ever handed over the problem to the physicist we had a glimpse of Man as a spirit in an environment akin to his own spirit. We recognize that the type of knowledge after which physics is striving is much too narrow and specialized to constitute a complete understanding of the environment of the human spirit."

In other words, the detailed examination of the world for which the special sciences, like physics or mathematics, take up particular positions does not suffice to satisfy the questioning mind. Detailed science, concerned with this or that department of human existence, is one kind of knowledge. General science or philosophy constitutes the second kind of knowledge. It is, in the definition of Aquinas, the understanding of all things through their fundamental and universal reasons.

The author of this book is not unmindful of the fact that there are many human values outside the purview of what he calls the philosophical outlook of science. "There are other things that claim the same kind of recognition [as that given to natural phenomena]: a sense of beauty, of morality, and finally at the root of all spiritual religion an experience which we describe as the presence of God."

CHAS. F. RONAYNE

From Pluralism to Communism *

THE evolution of Professor H. J. Laski, who is the most articulate and "publicized" of those Labour Party intellectuals who profess political theory, may be taken as an epitome of what contemporary facts have forced upon this sort of partisan. Mr. Laski is too well known to require an introduction for this his latest work, other than to say that it is by far the most coherent exposition of his own position that he has yet made. The Professor of Political Science at

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* THE STATE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE *by H. J. Laski* (VIKING. 299 pp. $3.00).

the London School of Economics is easily the most persuasive and polished partisan in the ranks of Labour protagonists today. His career has been brilliant and fruitful, both as a teacher and as a writer. He has a genius for being in the public eye, and is taken perhaps more seriously as a political prophet in this country than he is in England. The plight of contemporary political theory could find no more apt illustration than in his latest profession of faith.

It is not intended as a profession of faith. It is intended to be, as its author puts it, "in some sort . . . a sequel to my *Democracy in Crisis* (1933), the philosophic implications of which it tries to develop further". In the past Mr. Laski has had a fine contempt for the philosophical approach to the problem of the state, along traditional lines at least. He is, or was, a pragmatist who found no profit in wholesale inquiries into abstractions. And this book need not be taken in any sense as a recantation. He still holds himself absolved from any explicit statement of his metaphysical position, and proceeds to an analysis of "State and Government in the Real World".

The "Real World" on analysis turns out to have a cast startlingly Marxian, and Marx had a metaphysics. It was a metaphysics which he himself admitted to be rigidly Hegelian in its dialectic development of a world process, though a very topsy-turvy idealism in respect to its values. But Mr. Laski refuses to be a prisoner to the historical materialism which he implicitly accepts. Like Marx, the master, he ventures on to the assertion of the absolute ethical value of economic equality, though he has certainly not the remotest logical or historical connection with the determinism of economic power, "control over the instruments of production". By combining an analysis of world politics which contains the economic interpretation of history with the assertion of absolute economic equality as the basic driving force of political struggle, and a regretful tribute or so to the passing of the possibility of liberal values and the futility of constitutional settlements in capitalist democracies, one gets the essential flavour of Mr. Laski in this latest phase. The ingredients are not new. But their arrangement and emphasis are quite different.

Some years ago Mr. Laski was perhaps the foremost exponent of what was called "pluralism". In the name of the moral ultimacy of the individual, of loyalty to other associations such as churches, trade-unions, and the like, he demanded that the state accept its position as "discredited". It must be content to command such loyalty as was accorded to it, "Darwin-wise", in the struggle with other groups. Realistically considered, Mr. Laski pointed out, this was the state's position in fact. As a pragmatist he accepted facts and claimed for them the sanction of "*sein sollen*".

The face of the times has somewhat changed, and with them Mr. Laski. The facts no longer argue for a discredited state or for pluralism. The attempt on the part of syndicalistic labour to put pluralism into practice rapidly got Fascism as an answer. In the struggle for survival, the totalitarian state emerged from the battle royal, licking its chops reminiscently. Mr. Laski has very little to say about pluralism today.

As lately as the *Grammar of Politics* (1927), Fascism had hardly appeared on Mr. Laski's horizon, and then but as a small black cloud, no bigger than a man's hand. But by 1933 the impact of Fascism had shown him sterner logic. "Contingent anarchy" was not enough. In *Democracy in Crisis* he took a dark view of the prospects for constitutional settlement by democratic means of the "inevitable struggle". Today his fears are even blacker, and his tone more like that of John Strachey in a pessimistic moment.

Mr. Laski still talks in terms of reasonable settlements and democratic solutions. When he approaches the international sphere, indeed, his reasonableness outdoes all reason. He endows the League with properties little short of magical, though he admits that with the present class relations within the powers, imperialism has the upper hand. But his thesis is a fairly simple one: *In fact*, economic power dominates political power; equally in fact, and certainly in terms of ethical thought, men in the bulk desire everywhere a genuine economic equality. Remedy the discrepancy between this universal desire and the facts of capitalistic exploitation, and the state will also, in fact, be able to fulfill its true rôle. It will be relieved of threats of war, and able to be neutral in economic matters, since class antagonisms will be removed by communal ownership. This simple and quite Marxian analysis may seem too lacking in subtlety for Mr. Laski's dialectic powers. The reader can only be referred to the text itself. The analysis of the struggle for political power reduces itself to the Marxian formula: suppress classes, establish economic equality, and the need for the coercive quality of state action and for war disappears.

Now if this be the real world, "real" becomes a remarkably Platonic term. The current facts certainly do not bear out this interpretation; it exists only in the realm of Marxian ideas, along with the highly abstract and unrealistic concepts of rigid class-structure, the economic interpretation of history, and the like. Such complicated but very stubborn facts as population pressure, racial conflict, nationalism in all its phases, to say nothing of the play of social institutions like family, church, school, and the like, all have to be reduced to terms of class struggle. They can all be exorcized by the appropriate Marxian incantations.

But the facts which govern political action outside Marxian formulae show that political power flows back and forth, is checked and mediated, so that to speak of the "masters of the instruments of production" as a unified, coherent, and dominant class is sheer nonsense. There is a group of employers and managers, but they do not act as "masters" of their employees, nor in uniform accord with share-holders and bankers. These last are generally credited with supreme power. But they are very feeble masters in relation to the very centre of political power – *i.e.*, control over the purse-strings of the budget. There is something like a resolution of forces in the democratic process which means that there is no absolute victory. That is why Mr. Laski does not like it. Nothing short of suppressing all those who do not want economic equality will satisfy him.

But the great majority of men do not, *as a fact*, wish this solution. They prefer to take chances of inequality. What they do demand of the modern state is rather security than equality – a level of security which includes both personal and property rights.

Demonstrably the constitutional democracies do furnish this double security far better than any of the absolute systems – Fascist or Communist. They seem in no mood to drop this bone for the distorted Marxian reflection of Utopia that appears in the stream of Laskian theory. Perhaps that is why he despairs of democracy!

Mr. Laski, with liberal aid from L. T. Hobhouse's *Metaphysical Theory of the State*, disposes in very cavalier fashion with what he himself calls "The Philosophical Theory of the State". He seems not to suspect that he has in fact buttressed his whole argument with the ponderous metaphysics of Marx. Nor would the casual reader suspect that his own theory is as antithetical to that of Hobhouse as is well possible. For Hobhouse did not consider that he was absolved from a coherent and systematic treatment of the nature of political action simply because he had thrown overboard the load of Hegelian metaphysics then current at Oxford.

This book, however, does represent Mr. Laski in a new phase. He now accepts the Marxian interpretation with few of his earlier reservations. The logic of events has forced him to see that he can only attain Communist ends by Communist methods – *i.e.*, direct revolution. If the prospects of provoking a Fascist reaction seem more likely than a Communist triumph they do not discourage him. He embraces them with an air of martyrdom. It is not liberty, after all, which he wants, unless that liberty means the complete economic triumph of Communist equality. Russia he takes still as a warning to the exploiting bourgeoisie. He refuses to see in the Soviet experiment a warning to those who expect Communism to create a régime of personal liberty. The ways have now definitely parted, and he is ranged on the Communist, not the liberal or even the socialist side.

It is better so. Constitutional democracy may well take to heart the old Italian proverb: "God protect us from our friends. We can take care of our enemies ourselves!"

W. Y. ELLIOTT

Introspective Aesthetics *

OF ALL branches of philosophy aesthetics seems the most elusive and the most difficult to subject to criticism. For one thing aesthetics is so young a study that it has practically no points of reference; in considering a system of ethics or metaphysics it is always possible to criticize by comparison: one can always regard the work of a metaphysician or moralist in the light of a whole classical literature, and at the least one can say: "This philosopher is a Platonist, this a Kantian, this a Thomist." The parallel may in each case be a trifle unfair; there may be small matters of divergence which are of real significance; but there is, in a general way, a *terra firma* upon which to tread. For aesthetics, particularly that rather specialized department that deals with the arts, there is no *terra firma*, only a sea of speculating. Before the seventeenth century one finds few allusions to art in philosophical writing, and criticism is concerned with literature

* AESTHETICS AND PSYCHOLOGY *by Charles Mauron, translated from the French by Roger Fry and Katherine John* (THE HOGARTH PRESS, London. 110 pp. 4/6).

rather than with the arts in general. It is a continual surprise to find in mediaeval literature so little reference to the monuments of architecture, sculpture, and painting which are generally regarded today as one of the greatest contributions of that age. There are, of course, a great many documents relating to these activities: contracts, account books, and the like; but very little of a literary or critical sort and practically nothing philosophical.

With the disappearance of the Guilds and the apprenticeship system of art-education and with the appearance of the Academies and the conception of the artist as a gentleman rather than a craftsman begins the stream of philosophies of art, a stream which seems to broaden as time goes on until now the student of aesthetics finds himself confronted with an immense and ever-increasing mass of material, most of it indigestible.

M. Mauron's new book is mercifully short. And it has a good deal to recommend it to anyone who wishes to keep posted on the subject. The general reader will perhaps find it of little interest. The author begins by stating definitely that his subject is a branch of psychology, and must not be conceived "after the model of ethics". Thus we are given warning at the outset that he will attempt no definition of a universal beauty, but will limit himself merely to recording his own generalized impressions of a field where he has wandered considerably, of a country with which he has long been familiar. He claims no universality whatever for these impressions, but merely offers them as raw material for future psychologists, disclaiming for himself any rigorous knowledge of this science. In an early paragraph he neatly states his position:

> . . . So long as there are art-lovers on earth they will find in their inexplicable peculiarities motives of dispute. Thus, when the leaves are falling from a tree, each may say to its neighbour: "The physicists can think what they please, but I don't fall as you do." Which, we know, easily becomes: "I fall *better* than you." In this essay I have explained how I fall, in aesthetics. But I hope the reader will believe that it is an unassuming fall.

Such a beginning is modest, and makes it almost impossible to criticize anything which M. Mauron may choose to say, for he has always available an impregnable defence: he has merely described a series of intellectual phenomena as he has experienced them. No one else need experience the same phenomena; yet they are still valid because *he* has experienced them. Here is the bane of all introspective psychology; the poison which destroys it as a science: the findings of each introspective investigator are not subject to independent verification. They can, therefore, interest us only as a work of art, almost as an autobiography. There may be much in them that is useful or vivid or instructive, but they must be judged as literary or even poetic rather than scientific or philosophical works.

One can, however, before giving an account of how M. Mauron falls, in aesthetics, state a philosophical disagreement with his whole approach to the subject. The only possible connection between aesthetics and a soundly scientific psychology is in an activity which yields no satisfactory results, and soon becomes substantially worthless: namely the process of tabulating likes and dislikes – the reactions of a number of people to some work or works of art. A good deal has been done in this direction, notably by Mr. I. A. Richards. It has yielded results somewhat more amusing than edifying.

To say flatly that aesthetics is a branch of psychology, therefore, is to mean a branch of introspective psychology, and any attempt to make of this art a science seems to this reviewer a fundamental error. If aesthetics is to be considered a branch of this variety of psychology, then it can have very little to do with philosophy and nothing with science. Aesthetics must be considered from a positive point of view, or it becomes itself merely the art of describing one's reactions to other arts, a kind of travelogue in the realm of one's own imagination. But a positive aesthetics, an attempt to find abstract truth in this realm of human thought, need not be quite so naïve or obviously futile as the psychologists would like to have us believe. It must concern itself principally with two questions, and then with a further question corollary to the second.

(1) What is the nature of beauty? Not what *is* beauty. The term, like goodness and truth, is too general to admit mathematical definition. But the concept *beauty* can be described, and from the description may arise conclusions useful to philosophy.

(2) What is art? (In the most general and abtract sense.)

(2 *a*) What is the relation of beauty to art? Why, in other words, is one work of art superior to another? And how can we allow for the factor of taste?

This general criticism of M. Mauron's fundamental position does not signify that there are not fine things in his book, and things with which one could agree, even from a positive point of view. After he has developed at some length the significance of his rôle as an aesthetic guinea-pig, he proceeds to a very interesting exposition of his opinions on the nature of aesthetic experience. He first pays a tribute to the late Roger Fry and to Max Eastman as being the only expositors in recent literature of "my own spiritual attitude". He feels that Mr. Fry almost succeeded in accomplishing the first task of aesthetics – drawing a boundary "between the aesthetic emotion and the emotions of ordinary life . . . the concrete definition" of beauty. This drawing of a boundary arises from a disagreement with the Freudian view that "The work of art . . . is one of those day-dreams in which men seek . . . the fulfilment of certain desires either repressed, or denied satisfaction by the rigours of daily life". Fry could not reconcile this view with his own experience, and insisted that there must be a distinction "between aesthetic pleasures and instinctive satisfactions". He could not, however, lay his finger precisely on this distinction.

M. Mauron proceeds to state what he believes this distinction to be. The artist, he feels, is a contemplative; the rest of us are men of action. To the man of action everything is considered from the point of view of the future. The contemplative lives only in the present. Of course each individual has in him some strain of both attitudes; hence the ability of the man of action to experience from time to time the aesthetic emotion, and of the artist occasionally to think for the future. It is the attitude of mind which matters in distinguishing between the aesthetic emotion and the emotions of ordinary life.

Having come so far it is clear that M. Mauron has confused "contemplation" with revery – that certainly would be the principal criticism of a humanist. But his own special use of the word is so clearly stated that one cannot quarrel too much with it. Unfortunately it leads him to a somewhat effeminate – one might almost say belittling – attitude toward the artist and art which cannot help but wound anyone who feels strongly that art is not merely for pleasure, but fills a true need of human life. "The artist transforms us, willy-nilly, into epicures," says M. Mauron. The savouring of material goods can surely be a harmless pursuit if it is not carried to extremes, but one feels that art touches a plane of existence somewhat higher.

The remainder of M. Mauron's treatise is devoted to a development of his primary distinction between the contemplative (he points out that a Puritan would call it the "lazy") attitude and the active ("practical") attitude. Much that he says here is valuable to an understanding of the easel painting and "pure" (purposeless) art of the last hundred years, for modern art of this kind – what Eric Gill has called experiments in the cultivation of artificial flowers – is based by definition on the very attitude which M. Mauron describes as "contemplative". But one may question once again whether the subject here dealt with is truly aesthetics. Is it not rather a branch of pathology?

To one section in particular of M. Mauron's analysis attention should be drawn. It is his chapter on *The Pleasures of Organization* and it supplies a most illuminating interpretation of the satisfactions to be derived from what Roger Fry called "formal relations". It is in this chapter that M. Mauron gets very close to an idea which might have led him to a fundamental change in his whole conception of the "aesthetic attitude". "Nothing can be more rational than the demonstration of a theorem," he says, but then he lets slip the clue by adding: "yet a demonstration is not beautiful." Anyone with a liking for mathematics knows that a demonstration can be beautiful, and this consideration might easily have led to a positive definition of art and M. Mauron's emergence from the Sargasso Sea of introspective psychology. Aesthetics is still far from dry land: at least it is not necessary for a writer on the subject to encumber himself with weeds which cannot but impede his progress.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

Willa Cather and the Sense of Life*

SOMETIMES it seems that Willa Cather is an artist doomed not to be understood by her own times. Those who were young when the stories were written which later appeared in *Youth and the Bright Medusa* can never read her without a reminiscent recapturing of the excitement and joy to which they were once stirred, nor, sadly, without an unjust feeling that some tacit agreement between themselves and the author of those stories has not been fully met. Even less can the younger reviewers, handicapped by having been taught by the new psychology to criticize fiction by standards more suitable to the psychiatrist's laboratory than the artist's workroom, understand an author who uses only the materials which seem to her pertinent to her subject, refusing staunchly to handle those which her newest critics invariably try to thrust upon her. It is probably fortunate for all of us that Miss Cather goes quietly along her own way, offering book after book which we cannot fail to recognize and receive as the work of a true artist, although – some for one reason, some for another – seldom quite so generously as we should like.

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* LUCY GAYHEART *by Willa Cather* (KNOPF. 231 pp. $2.50).

That is what makes reviewing such a book as Miss Cather's *Lucy Gayheart* a thankless task. More than probably she fulfilled her own intention, and we have had evidence before this that her intention was often better than any we could have dictated to her. In addition, Miss Cather is unsurpassed in craftsmanship. Few novelists can do what she does so unerringly: she brings her *story* unobtrusively to a full circle; her characters then go on, truly created, alive independently even for us, who so often and so inconsistently complain that they were never fully living. Surely no author ever had a better right than Miss Cather to paraphrase Sargent's bitter epigram: "A portrait is a picture that has something wrong with the mouth." Miss Cather in her solitude must feel that our definition of a novel should be "A book which has something wrong with the end . . . or some character, or a motive".

At least she must have the satisfaction, for what it is worth, of knowing that her books are a vital element in the lives of her readers. While *Lucy Gayheart* was still running serially it already had the importance that gives rise to living gossip: "She killed off her hero at the end of the first part, and her heroine at the end of the second," we said; "what's left for the end?" No insignificant book raises such a question as that.

Well, what was left for the end is justification enough for a dozen novels, and yet I too want to join in the chorus of scolding and complaint, and say in my turn that if the book had been much shorter, if, indeed, it had been kept to the dimensions of a long short story, not even the most obtuse reader could have failed to see the pertinence of every element in it to that ending. Of course she did not "kill off" the hero or the heroine of her book at all, although the character who gives her name to the novel does drown at the end of the second section. For the hero – or heroine, as you choose – is none of the characters of the story, but the sense of life; and Miss Cather says so as openly as she can without bustling into the middle of her own scene. But since she did spend so much time in drawing Lucy, and in drawing the singer, Sebastian, they come to have at once too much and too little presence: too much if they are to be seen as vehicles of life, too little if we are intended to feel them as individuals.

Since the story of the book is well enough known by now, I shall only summarize it briefly. Lucy Gayheart, after a childhood in a small Western town, goes to Chicago in pursuit of music. Always vividly although undiscriminatingly in love with life, she learns through a relationship with Sebastian, whose practice-accompanist she becomes, the justification for her intense joy in living. The relationship is not quite love, is more intense than friendship, and after entering it she is unable to marry the cautious, prosperous suitor at home, in whose heart and memory she is destined to live on at the end of the book. Before she has learned to disentangle the gift of appreciation from the man who gave it to her, Sebastian is drowned. Crushed by his death, she returns to her home. Slowly, through long months, she tries to regather her life, for the blow has almost destroyed her sense of her own identity. Then just as she begins to understand – "What if Life itself . . . were like a lover waiting for her in distant cities?" – she also is drowned.

With an unfailing touch, Miss Cather saves this from being gratuitous tragedy. If Lucy had drowned before her moment of illumination, the book would have fallen to ashes; Lucy would have died without transfiguration. As it is, she lives on; and surely few novelists would have saved the treasure of Lucy's three childish footprints across the old cement walk to spend as Miss Cather does. The pattern of the book is at once subtle and clear: only Tolstoi's use of the railroad station in *Anna Karenina* returns to me at the moment as so surely handled as Miss Cather's scenes on the icy river. Every element of the opening pages is used again at the scene of Lucy's death, and yet there is not an obvious item among them. And then, with the generosity of the artist, there comes that added gift of the footprints, withheld until it can bring its own relief and comfort: "Was there really some baffling suggestion of quick motion in those impressions, Gordon often wondered, or was it merely because he had seen them made, that to him they always had a look of swiftness, mischief and lightness? As if the feet had tiny wings on them, like the herald Mercury." And, when the book closes: "As he was leaving the Gayhearts', he paused mechanically on the sidewalk, as he had done so many thousand times, to look at the three light footprints, running away."

Since the book has its successful pattern, since the closing section is no anticlimax, but embodies the very feeling of continuing life that its author intended, what possible complaint can there be against *Lucy Gayheart*? Yet the chorus of wistful complaint arises, however much it has been set off with appreciation and praise. Because Miss Cather knew so much about her Lucy, took us so close that we heard her breathe and knew her thoughts, she seems arbitrarily to have denied us some deeper knowledge that we needed, and which Miss Cather herself must have had. The relation between Lucy and Sebastian is ambiguous, not merely subtle; Lucy's sense of life — that central focus of the book — is never convincingly vivid for all the author's reiteration of it. Lucy's father and sister are stock figures, and Lucy herself too oblivious to them to lend them any part of her own rather fitful reality.

That is the type of complaint her readers must make against Miss Cather — surely the most satisfactory captiousness a writer can be asked to bear: that she does so well, we want her to do better, to give us what she herself has taught us to expect. And that is something as near perfection in art as the novel has been able to come.

DOROTHEA BRANDE

A Clique in the Arts*

THE contributors to this symposium are W. H. Auden ("Art and Psychology"), Louis MacNeice (poetry), Geoffrey Grigson (painting and sculpture), Arthur Calder-Marshall (fiction), Edward Crankshaw (music), Humphrey Jennings (the theatre), John Grierson (the cinema), and John Summerson (architecture). Their location in one book, says Mr. Grigson, the editor, is more or less accidental:

> The eight essays in this book are eight individual statements. They are independent of each other, and of the editor, whose only business was to invite, and to collect. They are not in any way the united views . . . of a clique in the arts, in criticism, in politics and social attitude, or in age.

Be that as it may, the book is still not without its unity. It is representative of the new group in England whose leaders (avowed or not) are Wystan Auden, Stephen Spender, and Cecil Day Lewis and which has made itself vocal chiefly through its poetry, much of it printed in *New Verse*, the magazine edited by Mr. Grigson. At least in the persons of the three leaders named, this group is distinguished by its adherence to Communism.

While Mr. Auden is the only contributor to this book who openly allies himself with Communism, a profound similarity of thought can be discerned in all the essays, so that Mr. Auden's being a Marxist and the others' possibly not seems a matter more or less fortuitous. Indeed, what significance the book has is to be found in this underlying unity of thought, in the constant presence of certain basic assumptions which bind together the writers. Taken as individual statements, their critiques are scarcely impressive; there is in them no sign of unusual penetration or even of unusual rhetoric to hide lack of penetration; but viewed as a whole there is a startling significance in seven essays from different hands revealing so close a similarity in essential thought. (I would except from these inclusive statements Mr. Crankshaw's excellent piece on music.) One must say that Mr. Grigson has read with little reward the Wyndham Lewis he so much admires if he thinks this book is not the product of a "clique in the arts".

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* THE ARTS TODAY *edited by Geoffrey Grigson* (JOHN LANE, London. 301 pp. 8/6).

What immediately strikes one about these critics is that, in dealing with the arts today, they believe they are dealing with something intrinsically new. All art that is pertinent to life is, of course, in some sense new. But the newness which the writers of this volume seek, and applaud, in art is not merely a secondary feature: it is the mark of absolute worth and where it is not present there is little to engage their attention. It would be unfair, however, to accuse them of being nothing more than the victims of unconscious habit; their search for the new has a logical foundation, no matter how mistaken its logic, and it concerns their view of human nature. The character of this view is made most plain by Mr. Auden, who divides history into three periods, doing it in a neat neo-Comtean chart on which he indicates that the "personal driving force" of the first period was "love of God" while that of the third period, our present one and a better one, is "the unconscious directed by reason". It is his belief that Professor Freud can teach us thus to direct the unconscious, in which he is followed by Mr. Calder-Marshall, who says "analysis is also a phenomenon superior to Marxism, Fascism, or Buchmanism; superior because it will change the whole mental life of man".

It is the view of man which attempts to discover the primary facts of his nature in his prehistory, whether racial or personal; it is the view which dictates Mr. Auden's assertion that an artist's calling may be explained by the fact that his parents were not "physically in love with each other"; which sends Mr. Grigson to the Altamira cave-paintings to find reasons for seeing in the puerilities of Paul Klee more than misguided virtuosity; and which allows Mr. MacNeice to preface a forty-two-page essay on poetry with the declaration that "poets do not know (exactly) what they are doing". It is, in short, the view of man which locates his specifically human qualities in his expansive impulses, and which looks on all in the past that tended to curb them as the outworn dogmas of dead theology or unscientific ignorance. The past that these writers find "usable" is the primitive past, which is not necessarily located in time and may be found in Aurignacian man, the Oceanic Islanders, or in hysterical Viennese; their quest for the new ironically drives them to the very old – only there can they find anything free of the trammels of accrued experience: for the originality they seek, they must turn back to what they consider origins. Considerable lip-service is paid to the past, it is true, but it is hardly convincing when contrasted with particular judgements made in the field of modern art. Mr. Grigson, for instance, has something to say about "extreme" art that is "of the individual, private, revolutionary art, which denies its own past", but his adulation of Joan Miró and Jean Hélion because their abstractions use biological rather than geometrical forms does not bespeak any great insight.

Style here is, as ever, the man, and the notebook roughness with which these essays are written indicates more than unwillingness to take pains with composition; it is a sign of the reverence for the "inspired", for that which wells up spontaneously from the primitive depths of the being and is not transformed by discipline – what is *new*. So the reader is given a great deal of quite personal matter: Mr. Auden presumably jotted his essay down at odd moments on the backs of envelopes; Mr. MacNeice tells us he likes his poetry best when it sounds like Mr. Spender's; and Mr. Jennings, in the unaccustomed rigours of imitating Wyndham Lewis's superb polemic style, forgets to say anything. By their own reasoning they are justified in doing this, because they are giving expression to that supreme verity of their world, the self.

They are not unaware of the difficulties to be encountered by this self in the actual world, but this awareness does not suggest to them any need to revise their conception of man, rather they demand the revision of the world in accordance with their peculiar concepts. Incidental aspects of the demand one must sympathize with, for they would (in intention) eradicate many of the abuses of modern society. Mr. Grierson complains of the commercial domination of the cinema; Mr. Auden objects to our civilization for its breeding of neurotics; and Mr. Calder-Marshall calls for a person who can see the "fundamental simplicity" of the problems of modern life. Burdened with high finance, neurotic, and frighteningly complex our civilization assuredly is, and the arts today reflect it, but a healthy society and the vigorous arts that accompany it will hardly issue from reformers who have succumbed to the insane simplifications of Communism and psychoanalysis. Those who can see the "fundamental simplicity" under our problems have seen that we must return to a sounder conception of the nature of man, and that those who seek a change without this return are but acquiescing in the errors from which have arisen the very things they condemn. If the arts today are to flourish as part of a sane and ordered life, the transformation must be begun outside their especial departments, for first there must be sought a change in spirit, that these other things may be added unto us.

GEOFFREY STONE

The Cathedral Builders*

AESTHETES, sociologists, and sentimentalists had best avoid this book. It is not for them. It is written solely from the economic point of view, carefully documented and provided with long tables of prices and wage scales. Its very completeness again brings

* THE MEDIAEVAL MASON: An Economic History of English Stone Building in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times *by Douglas Knoop & G. P. Jones* (MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS. 294 pp. 12/6).

to the fore the question, why are we provided with a wealth of books on mediaeval economics and few on less specialized subjects in mediaeval studies? There is no complete general work which considers all the aspects of the astounding outburst of ecclesiastical building in the thirteenth century, and such a book is badly needed. But we must perforce be content with what we get, and the present work is an excellent example of its type.

The book is most complete. It gives the economic history of the stone building industry in England during the later Middle Ages, and pictures the conditions under which the mason worked and lived. The problems of the craft are considered at length, and the later changes in the industry are carefully described. The book is largely based upon the examination of printed and manuscript records which have not been inspected before. The appendix includes many of these documents, which serve to illustrate the accounts and regulations of many mediaeval building operations. A somewhat inadequate bibliography concludes the volume. There is a good index.

Messrs. Knoop and Jones divide their survey into royal and ecclesiastical building, giving only brief mention to municipal and private building (which was relatively unimportant at this time). An interesting picture of the impressment of masons for royal operations is given, and we form a clear idea of the life of the mediaeval mason down to the last detail. The guilds and their organization are carefully considered, as are the materials with which the craftsmen worked. It is interesting to find that the great schools of masons centered around the quarries whence their material was drawn, and, in some cases, that mass-production workshops were established at these quarries to turn out vast quantities of standardized popular figures. The master *cementarius* and his duties are considered at length, and we learn the full extent of these able architect-contractor-craftsmen's varied functions.

The book is to be highly recommended to those interested in the subject, with the sole reservation that the narrow point of view, professedly confined to the economic, distorts and in some cases falsifies the general picture. No indication of the highly important philosophical theory of labour under which these masons worked is given, and the authors tacitly assume that the spirit of the labourer was the same as his modern brother's. This is flagrantly untrue, and leads to warped judgements in the final summing up of the authors' argument. No better demonstration of the fallacy of the purely economic or Marxian theory of history is needed.

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